

The Inside Story of Greece *D. Christophorides*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

November 26, 1940

FORCED LABOR FOR AMERICA?

An Open Letter to the Attorney General

Corn and Cannon Fodder

Simon W. Gerson reports on Iowa

Meet Col. Adler of the "Times"

A profile by Daniel Todd

Rescue Ship: 1940 *A cartoon by Gropper*

Between Ourselves

IT WAS very much an experiment that first evening at Webster Hall. The experts, all five of them, huddled behind the curtain before it rose to reveal the stage, and looked at each other in panic. The first session of NM's "Interpretation Please" was about to begin.

But in a few moments the interlocutor had spoken the opening words and the questions were being asked and the panel warmed up. The questions ranged all the way from Molotov's trip to Berlin to General Weygand in Africa to what the Japanese militarists were up to in Asia to President Roosevelt's war plans. It was stimulating and entertaining, closely reasoned, and above all exciting. A. B. Magil explained American foreign policy, answered queries on the labor movement and domestic affairs. Joseph Starobin roamed the world, deliberating, clarifying, weighing "the time, the place, and the conditions." Joshua Kunitz discussed what the Soviet Union was really like. General Yakhontoff talked on military strategy and the Far East. William Blake, Wall Street's bad boy, quipped and thrust with his rapier wit, and explained why, with all his knowledge of high finance, he couldn't make a stock market killing for NM, and how the working class would inevitably establish socialism throughout the world. And about half way through, while the experts were catching their breath, another expert, Phil Bard, showed how financial appeals can be made pleasant, painless, and productive.

The experts discussed and argued. Then Bruce Minton, interlocutor (substituting for Ruth McKenney, who had lost her voice and was at home angrily nursing a cold which prevented her from taking part in the great experiment), asked the audience whether "Interpretation Please" should hold other sessions. The enthusiastic applause from out front was a pleasantly decisive answer. So now plans are on foot for a panel of experts to discuss literature and culture. The place and the time will be announced here shortly. Bill Blake suggested that NM hire Madison Square Garden and discuss—with a suitable gathering of experts—sex. But he was hushed up.

What the evening at Webster Hall did show was a very intense eagerness on the part of NM readers and their friends to put their favorite experts on the spot. Before a listening audience, writers were asked to face without benefit of typewriter the opin-

ions and analyses with precise brevity. What surprised the experts most was that the audience so wholeheartedly decided that they did their job excellently.

The staff of NM, however, is afraid that its experts will begin to think of radio jobs instead of concentrating on the magazine. On the other hand, the workout brought questions from the floor that provoked answers which now the staff is clamoring for the experts to put into article form for future issues. Those whose questions were answered are now receiving their free three months' sub to NM. And it looks as though "Interpretation Please" is here to stay.

The next performance takes place in Philadelphia on December 1, under the auspices of the People's Forum, 810 Locust St. Same subject but new experts, with the exception of Joseph Starobin. The others are Adam Lapin, NM's Washington correspondent; George Murphy, publicity director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, whose lyrical and beautiful speech at an NM meeting a year ago we have never forgotten; and Simon W. Gerson, who will have just returned from his trip across the country for NM. Ring the old Liberty Bell, "Interpretation Please" is coming to Quaker City.

Just to change the subject before we remind you about NM's twentieth writers and artists ball, we ask you not to miss next week's issue. Bruce Minton will send you his report on the CIO convention, the most important labor gathering in labor history. Bill Gropper will be there also, telling his story in crayon and ink. And from New Orleans Barbara Giles will send a story on the AFL's annual meeting. New Orleans is Barbara Giles' home town so there will be an extra special touch to her report.

But about the ball. We've seen part of the script lampooning certain liberals under the title "Civilization As They Throw It." It's a scream and a howl and it will be given during the evening of the dance at Webster Hall, Saturday, December 7. Tickets are \$1 in advance and \$1.50 at the door. And they are being held for you at NM's office, or at the Workers Bookshop, 50 East 13th St.; or the Bookfair, 133 W. 44th St., N. Y. C.

A London letter is an event these days. G. L. T., writing in October, has a complaint to make. "In inscrutable manner a note from your office informs me that my subscriptions to NM ends with the new year. As a matter of fact I have

cently received NM, due, of course, to the exigencies of the bombs. The post comes regularly, but overseas mail is highly irregular and I should not be surprised if some nosey censor is receiving a profitable education reading what our American cousins think. How I wish I could be getting NM again particularly when this senseless destruction is obliterating landmarks and the truth about it all is plain as the nose upon your face.

"Between *alertes*, I catch sleep and a peek at this newspaper or that, especially at the *Daily Worker* which is waging so energetic a struggle for real raid shelters that every one loves it and it is publishing four daily editions now. I trust the entire population, nobly bearing this totally unnecessary ordeal, is thinking about the deep and underlying causes of this horrible war."

Who's Who

Demetrios Christophorides is a

prominent Greek journalist and editor of the newspaper *Eleftheri*. . . Simon W. Gerson continues tour of the country for NM. He is his way to Detroit to find out with progress the auto workers are making in organizing the Ford plant and how they feel about the war and other important issues of the day. . . Andrew Roth is a member of the secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations. His article in this issue is reprinted from the November *Amerasia*. . . Harvey Merrill is the *nom de plume* of an American psychiatrist. . . William Blake, a noted writer, the author of *American Looks at Karl Marx*, *The World is Mine*, and *The Painter and the Lady*. . . Ralph Ellison is young Negro writer and critic. . . Sylvia Gilbert's reviews have often appeared in NM. . . Sidney Alexander is a poet whose work is well known to NM's readers. . . Elizabeth Lawson is an authority on Negro problems.

This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Are You for Forced Labor, Mr. Jackson?

An open letter to the attorney general. Three Department of Justice attorneys reveal the shocking plans to "control labor." A Hitler program for the workingman.

DEAR MR. JACKSON: Francis Hoague, Russell M. Brown, and Philip Marcus, three of your assistants, lawyers occupying responsible positions in the Department of Justice, have written and published a blueprint for the conscription of labor in the United States. This document, entitled "Wartime Conscription and Control of Labor," takes up fifty-four pages in the November *Harvard Law Review*. It is a candid presentation of schemes by which existing laws and federal agencies will be used to handcuff to a great war machine every American man, woman, and child—even the lame, the halt, and the blind. It is, incidentally, one of the most callous and shocking documents ever to be put into print.

Your employees have worked out a gigantic plan which will permit "work or fight orders," the transport of labor battalions under armed guard from one point to another, and universal registration for arbitrary labor assignment at the whim of the government. They envision the suspension of all individual rights for workers, the abrogation of union contracts. They even project the wiping out of minimum working hours' laws for women and of laws requiring children to be in school. These Department of Justice lawyers foresee the government telling each person in the country whether he is to work or fight and, if work is decreed, where, when, and on what terms. There is to be forced service for the disabled, too—to "rehabilitate" them.

Your assistants, Mr. Jackson, have stated that the Supreme Court will uphold the laws chaining labor to the war machine because the government will "need" labor conscription, although the Constitution supposedly stands in the way. In effect, they suggest that the administration may safely regard the Constitution (with the Thirteenth Amendment forbidding "involuntary servitude") as a meaningless scrap of paper which can be ignored and flouted at will in carrying through the drive to war.

Tribute must be paid to the cleverness of this scheme to introduce military dictatorship in the United States. The plan is as ingenious as the celebrated opinion, issued in your name, which found that Mr. Roosevelt, by himself, could legally sell fifty destroyers to a European power in the face of a statute explicitly to the contrary. But while we are paying your employees credit, we must claim some for ourselves. NEW MASSES, in urging the defeat of the Burke-Wadsworth conscription bill, pointed out the tricky devices delib-

erately hidden in the bill to enable the government to conscript labor. Denials were issued then, but in the present article your lawyers admit that it is intended to use the very stratagems we warned against. Having gotten the American people to put their necks in the noose that the administration's legal draftsmen tied, it is now proposed that the government spring the trap. Here's the way your lawyers describe the operation:

Every American man between twenty-one and thirty-five has been registered for the draft. The law provides that the administration may grant "occupational deferments." This means that if John Smith is working in Henry Ford's plant, you can "defer" John Smith's entry into the army. Fine. But suppose John Smith joins the CIO and one day, together with his shopmates, decides to strike to settle a grievance. Henry Ford would merely reach for his telephone and call up President Roosevelt. If the men refused to go back to work, the President would be able to order their deferments canceled. The men would then be called into the army and the strike would be over.

Being good lawyers, your assistants have found a precedent for this step. In the last World War, the provost marshal general in charge of the draft issued just such an order. It was the infamous "Work or Fight" order of May 17, 1918. Anyone not in the army, it was announced, held his deferment only so long as he was engaged in "productive employment." President Wilson promptly applied this to a group of New England munition workers. He personally wrote the men, telling them in effect either to go back to work or to start putting on army uniforms. They went back to work.

Wholesale use of this deferment power, your lawyers suggest, is the way to conscript all labor, smoothly, quietly, without giving Congress or the people a chance to express their opinions on the subject. Workers can be made to accept any job, anywhere, and under any working conditions. The writers say: "The recently enacted Selective Training and Service Act authorizes the President to provide for occupational deferments and is capable of use for Work or Fight regulations among men of draft age." (Which is precisely what we pointed out in advance of the bill's adoption.)

But your lawyers were so thorough in their study of the technique of introducing forced labor that they came up with a device which they say is a "variant" of the deferment arrangement. It was practiced but rarely in the

last war, but your lawyers suggest that it could be used more extensively today. First, draft as many men as possible into the army. Then give them leave—"furlough" is the technical word. "On furlough" these Americans could go back to their jobs. All would go well until someone wanted to quit his job, organize a union, or propose a strike. Then the employer's long-distance call to Washington would result in the cancellation of furloughs, and the helpless employee would be whisked back into uniform, or forced to go back to work with that threat hanging over his head.

There's nothing dirty about this scheme, your lawyers indicate. A man on strike isn't working; if he is not working, he ought to be in the army. The government isn't punishing him for exercising his rights; it's just "selecting" him because he's not working.

According to your lawyers, the beauty of all these techniques for labor control lies in the fact that there is no need to pass a lot of new laws which might cause excitement and discussion. In addition, they say, it is even unnecessary to register all the men in the country to find out which worker ought to be shifted to which job. Census records and Social Security files can be used for this purpose. Is it just a coincidence that these supposedly confidential records have already been ransacked? It is known that census records have been indexed and that the Social Security Board has been feverishly working on indices of every person possessing a social security number.

Your lawyers also suggest the expansion of the US Employment Service as part of a labor conscription program. A list of all workers would be compiled; then employers would be ordered not to hire men except those whose names were on file with the Employment Service. But men who take part in strikes, or persuade others to join unions, or otherwise cause displeasure, would not be listed by the government. Perfectly constitutional, your lawyers say. They point out that if the government tries to order a man not to eat, it's illegal. But if the government won't list a man as employable and employers consequently refuse to hire those not listed, that is legal.

The article by your assistants states quite blandly: "Compulsory labor service results in the curtailment of a number of labor's hard-won rights." A good deal of space is devoted to discussing just how the government ought to exercise its already existing powers over labor. They suggest: (1) keep wages down; (2) end the closed shop; (3) put women and children in the factories. To accomplish the

latter, the authors indicate the necessity of repealing existing laws which limit the number of hours women and children may work. Your underlings even point to the possibility of *repealing laws requiring children to attend school*. They write:

Even to use voluntary labor of this kind [women, children] may mean the suspension of minimum hour laws for women and children as well as of laws relating to the time children are to spend in school and the duty of parents to provide an education. And dilution of labor means a suspension of closed shop agreements. Nevertheless, it is a foregone conclusion that in any war of prolonged duration, women and children will be considered as a working reserve if not part of the estimated labor supply.

(4) Lengthen the working day and the working week. (5) Begin a labor "apprenticeship and vocational training" program on a "vast scale." If this is objected to by workers, the lawyers say that such a program needn't be voluntary as at present—"some form of compulsory training will have to be considered." (6) Begin a program of "propaganda" to convince labor that the "government is alive to its needs." (The words within quotation marks are the words of your staff, Mr. Jackson.) Also give out badges as "tokens of distinction" to make workers happy. (7) Utilize disabled men. (Perhaps men whose legs have been struck off by a shell would be used to make munitions because of their intimate personal knowledge of the subject.) Unfortunately there is not space to list all of the other fascist schemes advanced in the fifty-four pages of the article drafted by men in your department.

Nor are your assistants bothered by constitutional qualms. "As the experience of the World War indicates," they write, "slight notice is given to constitutional technicalities in time of stress. Any further or more detailed discussion of the constitutional aspects of federal control of labor would therefore seem especially quixotic at this time." And elsewhere they state: "There is little likelihood that even the more rigorous sanctions used to enforce labor regulation would be held invalid under the Eighth Amendment as cruel and unusual punishment."

It is a terrifying document—made all the more terrifying because it was composed not by civilians but by highly-placed government lawyers. Behind its legalistic words one can hear the tread of an advancing military Gestapo. We say Gestapo advisedly, for the Department of Justice lawyers have cited Nazi Germany as a nation whose "long background of compulsory labor service" provides a precedent for the total conscription of labor in the United States. Their argument suggests that American labor must be placed beneath the heel of the military boot because the Nazis are exponents of the forced registration of all workers, because the Nazis have restricted the right to change employers, wiped out labor unions, moved workers from one place to another, and invented fiendish refinements in the

art of squeezing extra labor from civilians under military terrorism.

There is no word of condemnation of the notorious Nazi anti-labor laws in the article by your assistants. Coldly and brutally they offer measures of the same pattern for introduction in every American town and village. In discussing the last war as a precedent for the next they even refer to the use in the United States of "guards for workers being transported from one state to another, to prevent them from leaving the train en route"!

Your assistants likewise cite without condemnation the anti-labor laws of fascist Italy. And they find other useful precedents for smashing American liberties in the lawbooks of Japan, England, France, Poland, Finland, and a dozen other European countries.

We are sure you have read, Mr. Jackson, what the Senate Munitions Investigation legislative report had to say about the labor conscription proposals discussed in the *Harvard Law Review* article. We know that your authors read it for they cited it in their footnotes, although they suppressed the following comment on the barbarism of forced labor:

The democratic treatment of labor, under the Constitution, is essential to the survival of our institutions, and should not be replaced by a military control over labor unless a change in our institutions has been previously authorized by the people in the form of amendments to the Constitution. . . . The Committee finds that it is not advisable in the permanent interests of the Nation to attempt in wartime to draft civilian labor. . . . In view of the growth of dictatorships in the world using labor under military control, it is very important that the people weigh the grave dangers to our democracy involved in the draft of manpower under the conditions imposed. The price of a war may be actual operating dictatorship, under military control, in this country. (74th Cong., 2d

Sess., Senate Report No. 944, Part 4, pp. 4-5.)

It is fair to assume, Mr. Jackson, that your three employees speak for yourself and for the Roosevelt administration. If they do not, it is up to you and the President to make this unmistakably clear. This is especially true in view of the fact that Mr. Roosevelt has just been elected for a third term on the solemn pledge not to involve this country in foreign wars and to defend democracy and all the social gains of the past few years. Do you and the administration stand behind the article of Messrs. Hoague, Brown, and Marcus? Is conscription of labor as a device to "coerce recalcitrant workers" part of the government's plans? Do you agree that, despite your oath to uphold the Constitution, "constitutional technicalities" are to be ignored "in time of stress"?

There is one conclusion drawn by your assistants which we heartily endorse: "Too long has wartime conscription of labor been obscured in a hush-hush atmosphere . . . this study will serve to bring to the light of public knowledge the importance of this problem." It's too bad that their article didn't appear in print before the election so that you and Mr. Roosevelt could have been asked questions about it during the campaign in which you promised peace and the protection of labor's rights. Those questions must be asked now. The men, women, and children of America want to know whether the government is planning to march them under armed guard into forced labor to enrich the du Ponts, Morgans, Rockefellers, Fords, and Mellons. They want to know whether you are planning to fight Hitler by Hitlerizing America. You and Mr. Roosevelt owe them an unequivocal answer.

THE EDITORS.



"Cheer up, there's still Sidney Hillman on the Defense Board."

What's Happening in Greece

What the people are ready to fight for. John Metaxas, dictator, rules with London's blessing. The manifesto of the Greek Communist Party. An article by the editor of "Eleftheria."

MILITARY achievements dominate the headlines. It is reported that the *Evzones*, the Greek mountain troops, have decisively defeated the Italian Alpine divisions in Epirus; at least one Italian division has been completely routed in the mountain passes. In the south, the Italian drive against the Yanina seems to have been checked. It is difficult to estimate these reports objectively. In essence, the Greek-Italian war is merely one phase of the larger struggle between British and German imperialism, but the fact that the Greeks are fighting on their own soil naturally gives them a certain advantage in morale. The advantage also lies with Greece as far as terrain is concerned. Although Italian equipment is superior and Italian planes seem to bombard the major cities and ports without opposition, so long as the invading forces are numerically no stronger than the defenders, initial Greek victories are only to be expected. This is all the more true because British naval activities in the Mediterranean are evidently hampering Italy, as for example, the sinking of important ships of the Italian Navy at Taranto. True enough, Britain is not giving Greece assistance with man power. True, also, the British Navy's first consideration was to occupy the island of Crete and other Aegean islands, a measure of assistance not so much for Greece as in protection of the British possessions in Palestine and Egypt. Likewise, the Royal Air Force is securing bases in Greece not so much in defense of the helpless Greek cities but for the bombardment of the Italian cities of Bari, Brindisi, and Taranto. But even these instances of British activity certainly react to the disadvantage of Italy, and therefore assist Greece indirectly. The final result will most likely be, in case Italian supply routes are interfered with, that German troops will come through from Yugoslavia toward Salonika. In such an eventuality Greece's real position as a battleground in the imperialist conflict will become even clearer than it is today. And the outcome can easily be imagined.

WITHIN GREECE

Military developments, however, are only one side of the picture. A great deal depends on the internal situation within Greece, of which very little is being said in the press. The newspapers describe the Greeks in heroic terms, and recall the famous military achievements of the ancient Hellenes at Salamis and Marathon. A small number of successful Greek-Americans, who never before concerned themselves with the problems of the Greek people, are now coming forward: among them S. Skouras, the movie magnate; the Stephanou brothers, cigarette industrialists; Kyriakos Tsolainos, with well known

connections in Wall Street. These gentlemen have overnight become *Salaminologists* and *Marathonologists*. They weep bitter tears for the Greek people. They boast of the millions of dollars they will raise from their Wall Street friends for the Greek cause. They seek to impress Greek-American working people with the vision of heroic little England saving heroic little Greece. But these gentlemen say absolutely nothing, and have never before raised their voices, about the Metaxas dictatorship.

The fact is that the present Greek government is a fascist regime, and so far its refusal to come to Mussolini's terms has not made it less of a fascist regime. It is quite clear that unless a democratic transformation takes place very quickly in Greece, the Greek people will not be able to save their country from invasion and defend its independence against imperialism. General John Metaxas is as ruthless a dictator as any the world has seen. He seized power on Aug. 4, 1936, supposedly to save the nation from a general strike. In this *coup d'etat*, he was supported by the Greek monarchy, which had been restored the previous November through the influence of Great Britain.

BRITISH CONTROL

The entire history of modern Greece is bound up with British influence and control. During the whole of the nineteenth century, Greece was really an outpost of the British, and to a lesser extent of French imperialism, and played an important role in Britain's campaign against the Ottoman empire, against czarist Russia, and finally Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. Internally, the nineteenth century witnessed a continual struggle between the landed aristocracy and the rising Greek commercial and banking interests. Until almost 1900, the British supported the feudal oligarchy, but the two outstanding leaders of the Greek bourgeoisie, Charilaos Tricoupis and Eleutherios Venizelos, who came to prominence—the first in the eighties and the second early in the twentieth century—were both staunch Anglophiles. Under Venizelos, the Greek capitalist class came into its own in the revolution of 1909, and entrenched its power at the expense of both the court and the landlords. During the World War, most of the landed aristocracy and the court itself, under Constantine I, sided with German imperialism, but so strong was British pressure that the Germanophiles were compelled to keep Greece neutral for the first three years of the war. Finally, with the backing of British soldiers, Venizelos established a dual government at Salonika. Constantine was dethroned and Greece became an important anchor of Britain's eastern front, one of the beneficiaries of

Versailles and its related treaties.

Immediately after the World War, Britain continued to use Greek imperialist ambitions to cripple the Turkish empire. Lloyd George inspired the Greek invasion of Asia Minor in 1921-22. But when Turkey consolidated its independence with Soviet assistance, the British were compelled to change their course. Venizelos was left stranded, and in the final peace with Turkey, 2,000,000 Greek refugees who had been living in Asia Minor, were driven out although their ancestors had lived there for thousands of years. This upheaval, plus the general dissatisfaction of the post-war era, brought about the formation of a republic in 1924. The interests of the landowners and the banking concerns gradually tended to merge. A certain urbanization developed in the countryside and, to a degree, the agricultural methods were modernized, all of which broke the power of the old landed families.

THE WORKERS

But having achieved its difficult victory over the feudal power, the Greek bourgeoisie was soon confronted by the working class, which stepped on to the historical stage in its own name inspired by the world-wide political changes including the successes of the October Revolution. The Communist Party had been founded in 1918. During the twenties, it was variously dominated by labor fakers, opportunists, and Trotskyites. Coinciding with the economic crisis, however, a new leadership emerged, whose most famous figure was Nikos Zachariades, a former seaman and now imprisoned by Metaxas on a lonely Greek island. The crisis affected Greek shipping, tobacco agriculture and manufacture, wheat and textile production. The farmers struggled under the load of an enormous debt, while the export trade, very important for Greece, had to bear the cost of interest payments on the half-billion dollars of loans held by British, French, and American bankers. From 1931 to 1936 the Greek Communist Party won a wide audience among the workers, especially in the tobacco industry and in the merchant marine. This was a period of Anglo-German cooperation, which enabled German industrialists to increase their share of the Greek market. In this period also, the democratic movement, in which the Communists took the lead, reached wide proportions. In the election of January 1936 the Communists secured fifteen seats in parliament and held a strategic balance of power among political forces. They also made great gains in the municipal elections.

Against this rising popular tide, the British government installed King George II on the throne in November 1935, and in the following summer supported the *coup d'etat* by General Metaxas, who had extended his powers as

premier by royal decree. Metaxas swept the liberal and labor forces into the dungeons, and even took revenge on certain royalist factions. In the early months of his regime he encountered considerable resistance from many of the army officers, especially those who retained their contacts with the farmers of the north. Although illegalized, its leadership jailed, its officers and property confiscated, the Communist Party remained a vital force, its contact with the working class unbroken. Even the royalist leader, Agamemnon Schliemann, son of the famous archeologist, felt compelled to publicly praise the Communists as true Greeks, devoted to the interests of the people. Though Metaxas himself was closer to German influence than any other, until September 1939 he enjoyed the mutual support of both British and German policy. When Hitler marched into Prague the decisive influence of British capital revealed itself: Chamberlain gave Greece one of the same guarantees he offered to Poland, Rumania, and Turkey. Faced with Italian and German pressure especially since June, Metaxas chose not to play ball with Mussolini. What he might do if German troops enter the country remains to be seen.

Metaxas is a master of espionage, of torture and repression. Through espionage he was able to harass the work of the Communists, and with the assistance of several renegades he has taken a heavy toll of the Communist leadership. Zachariades was imprisoned, and has for four years suffered the most barbaric tortures. This has also been the fate of many liberals and labor leaders, among them Glenos, Nepheloudis, and Partchalides. One of the most brazen methods of the dictatorship, largely the work of the Greek Himmler, Maniadaakis, has been the use of forgery against the Greek Communists. For some time, Metaxas has sponsored a publication which is the exact reproduction of the Greek underground newspaper: *Rizospastis*. Picking up the fake government newspaper you could not tell it apart from the genuine *Rizospastis* unless the material were read carefully. This explains also the reports in the American press that the Greek Communist Party called for the support of Metaxas at the outbreak of the present war. Through private information, I am able to say those reports were merely the forgeries of Maniadaakis. A copy of the real *Rizospastis* has come to us through the devotion of a Greek seaman. And although it was published in the last days of August 1940 it anticipates the Italian invasion. Here is an excerpt from the latest manifesto of the illegal Party Executive, which explains the attitude of the working class toward the war:

PEOPLE OF GREECE!

The Communist Party is calling on you for a popular movement whose purpose will be to force the dictatorship to establish a genuine foreign policy for Greece, for the establishment of a well organized popular front which will represent not only the Greeks but the Turks, Macedonians, Albanians, Armenians, and Jews who live in our country. The defense of our country against the Italian invaders must be based on such a popular front. The Communist Party of Greece declares it will do every-



WHAT THE GREEK

COMMUNISTS SAY: This is

a reproduction of the first page of the illegal newspaper of the Greek Communist Party, "*Rizospastis*." It measures about six inches by eight and has four pages. This number is dated Aug. 29, 1940. New Masses received it through private channels. Its message will be found elsewhere on this page.

thing in its power to form such a front for the salvation of our country. It will do everything in its power to achieve an orientation of collaboration with the Soviet Union and other Balkan countries. It will stand in the front lines, with arms in hand, to crush the Italian invasion, or any other imperialist invasion. The Communist Party of Greece, from tip to toe a party of the people, understanding its responsibilities and seeing the immediate danger threatening our homeland, affirms that it is ready to collaborate even with the government of Metaxas on the following basic conditions: (a) political orientation toward the Soviet Union and other Balkan states; (b) that all measures be taken for the full and consistent resistance to the end against the Italian or any other aggressor; (c) complete liberty for the Communist Party of Greece and all other parties and organizations to strengthen the popular mobilization of the country, to exert all energies in the service and salvation of our country; (d) satisfaction of all the economic demands of the workers, peasants, and professionals.

In present conditions, any other policy is a betrayal of Greece. Communists, to your posts!

(Signed) The Temporary Executive Committee.

Greece is one of those many small nations of Europe which never were really independent. Before the rise of German fascism, they were instruments of Anglo-French policy. During that rise, they were pawns in the complicated prologue of the present war. And since the war has broken out, neither side has been interested in the independence of Greece except in so far as it could be used against the other side. The last year has brought about a catastrophic decline in Greek foreign trade; the budget figures show the enormous drain on the Greek people of the foreign debt. The dictatorship has seized the funds of the popular organizations, and democracy has been undermined and crushed. The Greek people are certainly capable of defending themselves. But they will do so with success only in their own interests, not in the interests of any imperialism, German, Italian, or British. To achieve that defense, not the regime but only the people themselves can be trusted.

DEMETRIOS CHRISTOPHORIDES.

Col. Adler: Publisher in a Brass Hat

The New York "Times" manager is a misunderstood man. Why he crusaded for peacetime conscription. His paper has become an "army house organ." The press falls in.

COL. JULIUS OCHS ADLER, at present on a year's leave of absence from the New York *Times*, is a small military man with a bristling mustache which gives his face a look of virtuous indignation. He denies with some heat that he ever required his chauffeur to salute him while in uniform. This allegation, which is widely believed in the *Times* building, is the result of the intensely warlike appearance of his stumpy frame, which he keeps fit by bending exercises, even when it is encased in mufti. If you saw the colonel for the first time striding smartly across Times Square on his way to work, you would perceive instantly that he was a retired army officer. For twenty years after demobilization in 1919 the War Department felt that he was more valuable to his country sitting behind a desk in a newspaper office barking orders at the public than walking up and down on a drill field in the hot sun. He ordered the public around in the commanding accents of Gen. Hugh Johnson of the Roy W. Howard Horse, a man he resembled in no other way than as two short, somewhat stout men, who both spent several years under arms, are bound to resemble each other. When his duty called him a few months ago he excused himself from the *Times* building and left to take charge of the reception center at Fort Dix, N. J. His position does not, as the name seems to imply, mean that he hands out to recruits doughnuts and a cup of coffee. He greets them and impresses them with the seriousness of the United States Army. The first face which confronts recruits at Fort Dix is Colonel Adler's.

A year ago, probably no one in the world except his immediate family and the secretary of war were aware of Colonel Adler's existence. As vice president, treasurer, and general manager of the *Times*, he kept mum. Once, in 1933, he took to the air to bawl hell out of "certain ex-service men, spongers, swivel-chair veterans and professional heroes," who wanted the bonus, and the *Times* printed this intemperate address in full. It was plain to *Times* readers who took the trouble to plow through the text that if a cowardly Congress gave Colonel Adler the bonus, he would throw it back in the scoundrels' teeth. Now and then, over the years, he got a pistol trophy or an award from the National Rifle Association; and *Times* readers, without being particularly upset, were able to follow his career upward in the Knickerbocker Greys. In 1934 he was a corporal. In 1937 he was a captain. Yes, Colonel Adler can take care of himself. In 1938 the *Times* recorded that his summer cottage was damaged by fire. For the most part, *Times* stories about him were not carried in other sections of the press, which believe that the *Times* is often unnecessarily thorough. Once or twice each year he dedicated a me-

morial with a belligerent speech, and he occasionally excited the American Legion with talk of the coming world conflagration. Every March, with the regularity of the opening of the opera, he was appointed civilian aide to the secretary of war for the second corps area, in charge of enrollment for Citizens' Military Training Camps. He spent his vacations in uniform.

COLONEL ADLER MISUNDERSTOOD

All this time he was secretly stropping his saber. Lesser *Times* employees laid eyes on him for the first time in their lives when he gave testimony in a Labor Board case between the *Times* and the Newspaper Guild. He said that he had been misunderstood. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the *Times*, took the stand and testified that he was misunderstood too. Colonel Adler is the nephew of Adolph Ochs, who published the *Times* in its formative years. In 1917 he was best man when Mr. Sulzberger came up from Camp Wadsworth in South Carolina, where he was a second lieutenant, and married Mr. Ochs' daughter Iphigene. That cut him into one of the sweetest things since the Mother Lode. As the influence of newspaper potentates like Hearst and Howard went to pot, the influence of Sulzberger and Adler waxed until when the *Daily Princetonian* Alumni Association gave Adler his journalistic award, everybody said he deserved it. For a time in the first administration of President Roosevelt, Arthur Krock, bad boy of the Washington oracles, got confidential tips about Roosevelt's intentions, and he ran up one or two trial balloons. Subsequently relations between Krock and the White House became cool, but the *Times* continued to maintain cordial connections with every part of the government, particularly in the State Department. The beginning of war in 1939 caused these connections, which in some cases had been as fragile as gossamer, to solidify, and who should be picked to break the news of peacetime military conscription to an unsuspecting nation but Col. Julius Ochs Adler.

When the *Times* wanted to campaign against the Wagner act it ran regular editorials and quoted the opinions of every stump speaker before the National Association of Manufacturers. But it was not what is known as a campaigning newspaper. It refrained delicately from organizing taxpayers' groups, and it never wrote the speeches for the NAM speakers. It had ethics. Peacetime conscription was a horse of a different color. Colonel Adler seized a lantern and dashed off to tell the members of the Harvard Club. The *Times* carried his remarks the next morning, identifying him merely as commander of the 306th, and civilian aide to the secretary of war. After

a few more outbursts of rhetoric on Adler's part, the *Times* dropped its coyness and said right out that this Adler was connected with a prominent New York newspaper. Adler did not exactly form the Military Training Camps Association single-handed, for the thought had been in the back of many minds for twenty years, but his presence among the original cabal which met in the Biddle Room of the Harvard Club, a sanctified spot where the Military Training Camps Association was formed in 1915, ensured the movement a good press. The Plattsburg Idea, as it styled itself, was composed of a rather ridiculous group of customers' men who wanted to be sure that if they were called up they would be officers, permitting them to order people around. They were willing to take orders from men like Colonel Adler, of course. This ambition, however creditable, would have no effect on the country's military effort unless their example proved contagious and several million youths in humble circumstances demanded the same training being doled out to Mr. Winthrop Rockefeller, which was their right in a democratic country. The only value of the Plattsburg Idea was in the field of propaganda. This makes it the biggest bust since Hearst's Paul Reveres. The humorous stories about Private Winthrop Rockefeller's big feet were a liability, if anything.

REPORTING PLATTSBURG

A special correspondent for the *Times* accompanied the citizen-patriots to Plattsburg and did his best, which was not bad, to make army life seem like a gay romp in the Stork Club. His name was not revealed, but he had evidently been drafted from the society department, and he brought along a healthy respect for a million dollars. At the thought of Angier Biddle Duke waiting on table, he almost swooned. A fellow was not allowed at Plattsburg unless he was a "demonstrated leader" in business, the professions, or labor, and it was delightful to watch labor leaders like John Hay Whitney and Marshall Field racing around camp banging away at each other with army rifles loaded with blanks. Colonel Adler, presenting the colors to the 800 chosen, was struck with the significance of the occasion and delivered his speech with a suspicious catch in his throat. Another somber note was struck when a 240-pound man, aged 42, being obliged by his superior officers to climb a mountain under a heavy pack, died of heart failure. Another man became "uproarious" at four AM and was coldly requested to leave. Tucked in at the end of a long dispatch from the *Times* special correspondent about the Plattsburgers' morale, which was naturally high, was this paragraph: "A couple of men who expressed views which sounded slightly un-

American a few nights ago were dealt with by a kangaroo court-martial." You have to take the bitter with the sweet. The *Times* man soon was merry again, starting off his dispatches like this: "A terrible babel of voices broke out on the parade ground this afternoon. There were growls and grunts of every pitch and inflection. Number one sentry wheeled around, his gun ready. It sounded as if a bunch of foreigners had made a landing on Lake Champlain. What the soldier saw was nothing to get excited about—just the 800 Plattsburgers of 1940 taking a lesson in army voice culture—" Most of the demonstrated leaders had had their uniforms made by their own tailors before leaving New York, not trusting an army fit—a fact humbly recorded by the *Times*—and "a Mr. Newman" set up his tent in their midst to take care of last-minute alterations. Before dress reviews there was such a scurrying around camp! such a bustle! The *Times* man was concerned at the treatment the army gave these jaunty uniforms. "Their aggressive spirit was developed further," he wrote, "as they were instructed to rush forward in skirmish line and then throw themselves on the ground in firing position. It was something to see men with roly-poly haunches do this." At the end of a day's activity, Mr. Newman's nimble fingers were kept busy sewing up bursted seams. The citizen-patriots never minded. "Watching the men in the morning," reflected the *Times* correspondent, "it seemed as if something of the boyhood cowboy—and Indian games survives in every man."

While this skylarking was going on in Plattsburg, the Burke-Wadsworth conscription bill was being debated in Congress. The *Times* seemed to be confident that it would pass, but it was really as anxious as a poker player after betting his bankroll on a four-card flush. The *Times* is not a quixotic paper like the *Herald Tribune*, which came out for war as long ago as last May. It does not do anything foolish. The Burke-Wadsworth bill was undoubtedly one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before Congress in the history of the republic, and the *Times'* calm, in the light of its excitement, when faced with mild proposals like the 1938 Reorganization Bill, was remarkable. It really was excited. It was trembling all over. It only thought that if everybody kept quiet the public wouldn't know what happened till it was all over. In the month of July, when hearings on the bill were being held, the *Times* carried a story every day, but only four times in that period did the story appear anywhere ahead of page fifteen. It reluctantly reported that certain trade union leaders opposed conscription, but luckily no fewer than fifty-two individuals and groups were for it, including the Pelham Preparedness Council, the presidents of Harvard, Princeton, General Motors, and the United States, "400 young men," the mayor of San Francisco, ex-members of New York National Guard Squadron A, and assorted Princeton alumni, industrialists, and retired brigadier generals. Colonel Adler spoke

four times for the bill. What clinched the matter for the *Times* was when the demonstrated leaders who had paid \$100 apiece for their outing at Plattsburg passed a resolution for it, which was not surprising in view of the fact that the Military Training Camps Association had been revived for that single purpose, and \$250,000 had been appropriated to get groups to pass that kind of resolution. The *Times* felt that nobody could oppose conscription after that, and in the pages of the *Times*, almost nobody did.

A fact which gratifies Colonel Adler and Mr. Sulzberger is that when Roosevelt, in June, wanted a newspaper to carry an editorial in favor of conscription which he could comment on approvingly in a press conference, he chose the *Times*. The *Times* ran an editorial, Roosevelt commented on it favorably, and less than four months later the conscription bill was passed, proving to the *Times* that democracies can act. New York's commercial newspapers divided on the conscription bill in the following manner:

The *Times*—For.
 The *Herald Tribune*—For.
 The *World-Telegram*—For.
 The *Post*—For.
 The *Daily News*—For.
 The *Sun*—For.
 PM—For.
 The *Daily Mirror*—For.
 The *Journal & American*—For

All the papers were on the same bandwagon, but the *Times* was driving. The press has frequently acted in unison in the last few years. Newspapers in industrial communities act together during strikes. They act together in wartime. They are acting together right now. As everyone knows, in the United States there is no Cabinet portfolio for propaganda, and this uniform reaction has encouraged some persons to believe that the provisions in the army's M-Day plans for regimenting the press will not have to be put into effect. Unfortunately, the labor press did not exhibit the same agreeable cooperation, and the *Times*, with a circulation of 1,500,000 and a great deal of self-esteem, may have to submit to regimentation to enable the government to get at the labor press.

THE PRESS FALLS IN

It is by no means certain that this regimentation has not already begun. Reporters who covered last summer's Havana conference submitted their credentials to representatives of the State Department, and were told what the Department wished them to write. The only way to get news at Havana was to attend the press conferences. Several correspondents who speculated about what was occurring behind the locked doors of the Hotel Nacional received a rebuke from kindly old Secretary Hull himself. Secretary Hull had the power of excluding them from the press conferences, which in the end he did not have to do. A few weeks later Secretary of Navy Knox did an astonishing thing. He wrote

an introduction for a report on the destruction of France, written by his personal representative, Col. William Donovan, in collaboration with the head of the European staff of the secretary's newspaper, Edgar Ansel Mowrer, and issued it free with the United States seal of approval. He was not acting as a newspaper publisher, but as Secretary of Navy; the lies and half truths with which the report was full were included for a specific purpose, which was not explained in the report. When Ambassador William Bullitt gave his speech about France, using the same approach, the State Department took unusual pains to let the public know that what he said was an official expression of the Department's views. Virtually no news now comes out of Washington except in the form of mimeographed press releases. Every Washington dispatch in the *Times*, and to an increasing extent in other papers too, has to be examined closely to determine why the State Department, or some other government agency, selected that particular moment to disseminate that particular item of misinformation. The most ironic comment on the nature of the recent presidential campaign was when the *Times*, which had become so intimate with the Roosevelt administration that it amounted to a semi-official organ, came out for Willkie. The editorial page maintained stoutly that there was so a difference between Roosevelt and Willkie, but this was just one of the occasions when the editorial writers didn't read the rest of the paper.

THE WOMEN

Since the enactment of the conscription bill the *Times* has been functioning hopefully as a kind of army house organ, running a page or two a day about the humorous side of life at Fort Dix, where Colonel Adler is fattening up soldiers from the New York area. Most of these stories seem to have been written by the *Times* Plattsburg correspondent and they are designed to make life in the army so attractive to the young that they will join up immediately without waiting to be drafted. Lily Pons, we learn from the *Times*, is willing to become a cook at Fort Dix. So far the *Times* has portrayed Fort Dix as a kind of combination Jack and Charlie's and Boy Scout camp. Meanwhile, it is still driving the bandwagon. When Robert Jackson and Sidney Hillman beat such a hasty retreat the other day on the question of defense contracts to Wagner act violators it was because of a stern editorial in the *Times* saying that the list of Wagner act violators read like a bluebook of American industry. The *Times* had violated the Wagner act itself. Colonel Adler, in intervals between frowning fiercely at new arrivals at Fort Dix, gave speeches saying that conscription was only the beginning. Men between twenty-one and thirty-five had registered; now how about women? Women readers of the *Times* are shifting uneasily under Colonel Adler's gaze. The man is not satisfied. But he has never been happier in his life.

DANIEL TODD.

Corn and Cannon Fodder

Simon W. Gerson reports from Iowa where the farmers say "No, thank you" to the lure of "wartime prosperity." What's doing down on the farm.

Des Moines, Iowa.

INSIDE the road cafe somebody dropped a nickel in the juke box to play *Is It Love, or Is It Conscription?* (Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra). Outside, the station attendant was filling the gas tank. He grinned at my question on the draft.

"Mister," he laughed, "I got a waydown number, a wife and two kids to support and, boy, am I physically unfit."

That was my introduction to the war attitude of the Union's wealthiest agricultural state; and it was fairly typical. This is, of course, only casual evidence but proof of a more tangible sort is not lacking that there is a powerful, unorganized sub-surface sentiment in Iowa against participation in the war.

They were completing the election canvass when I got to Des Moines and the final figures underlined what everybody knew: that after carrying the state in 1932 by 184,000 and in 1936 by 134,000, Roosevelt lost to Willkie in 1940 by about 40,000 votes. Local Roosevelt supporters argue that the farm population of German extraction was decisive. Actually, however, they know this to be untrue. Most of the Iowa German stock, as a matter of fact, is descended from the democrats who fled the fatherland in 1848. It is anti-Hitler. Pro-Nazi sentiment and organization among these people is negligible.

This is not to say that Roosevelt did not get a heavy farm vote. He did. AAA benefits, won after bitter struggles by the farmers with support from city labor and progressives, have undoubtedly shaken the congenial Republicanism of the Midwest farmer. But FDR's loss of ground in Iowa can be explained no other way than by reference to his foreign policies. Certainly, AAA benefits were not appreciably smaller. Certainly, the crop was not bad—it was very good, in fact. While the third term was a factor it caused no such perturbation as the President's attitude on the crucial war question. The Midwest simply does not share the feverish attitude of the Eastern seaboard incessantly bombarded by the "invasion" propaganda.

DOMESTIC POLICIES

Another explanation for the heavy Willkie vote in Iowa's small towns must also be sought in the domestic policies of the New Deal. The small business man sees the monopolies making money hand over fist. He reads propaganda that city workers are pulling down high wages. He knows that the unemployed were receiving some form of relief. He has actually cashed AAA checks for his farmer friends. Everybody else, he feels, is getting something from Washington while his existence is daily becoming more precarious. He placed the blame squarely at the door of

the New Deal. Thus it was that the towns, as differentiated from the big cities where labor generally voted Democratic, went solidly for Willkie.

Additional evidence of the anti-involvement mood of the Iowa farmers is to be found in the congressional votes on conscription. Eight of the nine Iowa representatives voted against the Burke-Wadsworth bill. All eight who voted against the peacetime draft were re-elected by comfortable majorities and the ninth, who had considerable difficulties in 1938, managed to squeeze through.

A random canvass of youth sentiment taken by the Des Moines *Register* at the state fair is rather convincing proof that the congressmen knew what the people back home were thinking. "None," wrote the *Register* reporter about the youngsters, "said he was 'anxious to go to war.'" Something of a masterpiece of understatement, that. The lads, where not flatly against the draft, were cagy. "I think a lot of us will be needed on the farms," twenty-year-old farmer Robert Bastow solemnly told the reporter. Another farmer's son, Jack Smith, looked the reporter straight in the eye. "I was graduated from East High School last June and am going to Iowa State College this year," he said. "Conscription is okay with me if they exempt those attending college."

While the *Register* has taken some interesting polls, it has not drawn the necessary conclusions. Gardner Cowles, its owner, is also boss of the Minneapolis *Star-Journal*, *Look* magazine, and a number of radio stations. He is known as one of the Midwest's ideological leaders, Iowa's loudest drummer for war via the aid-to-Britain route. Mrs. Gardner Cowles, incidentally, is head of the local Bundles for Britain, Inc. After Ambassador to England Joseph P. Kennedy spilled the beans on the British empire, the

Register led a furious attack in a lead editorial entitled "What Is the Man Driving At?"

Organized labor is as yet a minor factor in the state. Both AFL and CIO organizations, with a few notable exceptions, have been inactive on the war question. Fundamental in any gauge of Iowa public opinion is the attitude of the farmer towards war prices. In 1914-18 the mirage of war prosperity danced crazily over the prairies. Midwest farmers hocked family pianos to acquire new acreage for \$2 corn and fodder for \$20 hogs. But the fever that seared the Iowa loam was soon washed away by a wave of falling prices and foreclosures. Fortunes melted and millions of dollars' worth of properties found their way into the hands of the banks and insurance companies. The farmers have never forgotten the black, post-war period. Not pacifism but bitter experience has brought them the understanding that there's no gold in the faraway hills of Europe.

NO ROAD TO PROSPERITY

I got that view from farmers but checked it with other sources and found a surprising unanimity. Big, baldish Jim Russell, veteran farm editor of the Des Moines *Register and Tribune* and the Midwest's most prominent agricultural writer, was emphatic on the point. He repeated my question thoughtfully: "Do farmers feel that war will bring back farm prosperity? One year ago I would have answered unqualifiedly yes; today the answer is no. About September of last year many Iowa farmers got excited about the possibility of selling a lot of corn and pork to the Allies. Then Canada placed an embargo on pork, which hit Iowa hog raisers hard. No, sir, they certainly don't view war as the road to farm prosperity."

Iowa farmers know that England won't buy American foodstuffs in quantities sufficient to affect farm prices here unless credit is extended. They know that the business of loans and war debts is simply a repetition of the 1917 madness. While there is anti-Hitler feeling and sympathy for England it does not reach the point of willingness to extend large scale credits and send American boys abroad. There is also a certain dislike for England which stems from British financial control over the international grain market at Liverpool.

Charley Speck, an old farmer whose home we visited, rummaged through a mass of mimeographed documents to show us the figures proving that farm exports have dropped disastrously. (These Iowa farmers study figures to an extent no city dweller can conceive. Maybe it's because they're fundamentally business men in outlook—the aver-



age Iowa farm is 160 acres and is worth about \$12,000.)

"Look," said Charley, "look at the percentage drop of US farm exports in January-July 1940 from the average export of the same period during the years 1924-29:

Pork	72.8
Lard	69.2
Wheat	66.2
Apples (fresh)	85.3
Tobacco (leaf)	38.6
Cotton	9.9

"You see, the bottom dropped out of farm exports. Canada won't take our pork. France isn't a customer and England is buying wheat and beef from Argentina. Meanwhile, as a result of war orders, exports from the United States were \$1,000,000,000 higher during the last twelve months than last year. Yessir, somebody's making money out of the war but it's not the farmer."

This Charley Speck, incidentally, is a rare Iowa character. Communist candidate for governor in 1940, this tall, rawboned farmer's eyes blaze with a prophetic vision when he discusses the farmer's woes. With the aid of his wife and three children, he gets out an eight-page weekly mimeographed newspaper, the *Spotlight*. Each week from his ancient typewriter and mimeograph machine he issues a new attack on capitalist politicians, with special, homely barbs reserved for those closest home. His office in times of terror has been a cornfield where the mimeograph machine could be cranked in the shelter of the silk-tasseled grain. After the 1929 crash Charley and a group of fellow farmers in Crawford County helped organize the Farmers Holiday Association and they held those famous penny sales.

PENNY SALES

"Yessir," he reminisced, "those were the days. Back in 1933, we'd all get together when a neighbor was to be sold out and we'd bid for the farm. Of course"—here his eyes twinkled mischievously—"we weren't spend-thrifts. We'd bid two cents for a chair, a nickel for a table, and maybe a dime for a piece of farm machinery. We'd spend maybe as high as two dollars for a fellow's farm. Then we'd give it back to 'im."

There were occasional minor interruptions. A representative of a bank or insurance company would come around and try to bid up the price. One offer which indicated the city feller's extravagant notions of the value of farm equipment or furniture was sufficient to bring to his side a group of lanky farmers. Said Charley gravely, "We'd kind of usher him out of the grounds politely."

So widespread did the penny-sale movement become, and so vigorous was the struggle against the efforts of sheriffs' deputies to interfere, that in one county the National Guard was called out, fifty-five arrests were made, and twenty-two farmers were convicted for contempt of court.

Charley sighed. "Those were some days."

The economic plight of the farmers today is not of the same character as in 1933. But the Triple A and Henry Wallace are still major subjects for debate wherever rural folk gather, much more, in fact, than even foreign policy. This also extends to the youngsters. One high school teacher told me that in a pre-election debate which she had organized the youngsters in her class discussed the merits of the two major parties almost exclusively from the point of view of the effect of the New Deal on corn and hog prices. On the whole most Iowa farmers have signed up under the AAA and are reconciled to some degree of federal regulation. To the extent that it provides cash benefits and a floor to corn prices the AAA is widely supported by the producers.

"They also like the principle of soil conservation," explained Frank North, a huge, sandy-haired successful farmer, one-time leader of the 1933 holiday movement. "You see," he patiently explained to me as I sat in the Speck living room, "corn is a depleting crop while alfalfa and clover are conserving crops."

The Speck family and neighbors who had come in to visit nodded agreement as North explained the facts of rural life to the city visitors. "The Iowa farmers," North continued, "would like to raise all the corn they could but they know there's a surplus. They were real sore at Washington for the pig-killing and plowing-under business but they do understand the need for something like the AAA. Of course, it works out to the greatest advantage of the big farmer. You take corn now. The sealing price, that's the price at which the government will take your corn and seal your corn crib, will be about 61 cents a bushel this year. Corn is now selling at about 47 or 48 cents. But the poorer farmer can't wait. He's got to have groceries right now. So he hauls his corn to market and sells it at the current price while the big fellow sits back and waits for the government price. Sometimes the wealthy farmer will seal all his own corn and buy up his poor neighbors' corn at distress prices and feed it to his own hogs.

"Prices are nowhere near cost-of-production or parity level. If you figure taxes and everything the cost of production of a bushel of corn is more than 80 cents. But the farmers keep hoping for a better crop next season." He chuckled. "This is the greatest 'next-year country' in the world."

A lot of them keep hoping, but the trend, even in this prosperous farm state, is toward gradual dispossession of the farmer from his land. Tenancy has increased from about 10 percent in 1910 to 58 percent in 1940. Even where nominal ownership exists there is a huge debt load. More than 90 percent of the owner-operated farms are under heavy mortgage and about 24 percent are now owned by banks, insurance companies, and the government. If distress here is less acute

than in other farm areas it is due to the amazing fertility of the soil and the absence of drought. The relative advantage of Iowa compared to other farm states is shown by the estimated 1940 farm income of \$700,000,000 contrasted with \$735,000,000 in 1929. In terms of purchasing power this year's Iowa farm income will buy about as much as that year's. The difference, however, lies in its distribution—fewer farmers will benefit from it than did in 1929.

EDUCATION

But the superficial story of a comparatively prosperous year by no means tells the whole Iowa story. I got a side glance at the status of education in this prairie state when I bumped into the convention of the Iowa State Teachers Association in Des Moines. Shepherded by their superintendents and the Chamber of Commerce, 10,000 Iowa teachers, about 90 percent of them women, listened to speeches on "The Place of the School in Defense." There was little or no discussion on teachers' salaries, for the very good reason that the subject is a painful one. The state minimum for teachers is \$40 a month (with board). One teacher told me of a friend who had applied for a job in a small town and was told she could have it at \$35 a month. "But \$40 is the state minimum," she protested. "Okay," said the school board head, "you can have forty but you'll have to provide the coal this winter for the school yourself."

Apart from the economic hardships, moral restrictions are severe, and woe to the teacher who dares to smoke a cigarette or drink a cocktail in this prohibition-ridden, Bible Belt state. Reading is not encouraged, either. Some idea of the cultural situation may be gleaned from the fact that the Garner (Ia.) public library has one copy of *The Grapes of Wrath*. In another town a librarian timidly asked a teacher whether she had read *Kitty Foyle* and would it be proper to include it in the town's collection? *The Grapes of Wrath*, of course, was out. Obscene, she said.

Under the circumstances, youngsters live on a steady diet of pulp magazines. They are so bored with small town and farm life that in their craving for excitement the high school, junior college, and college youngsters look forward with real anticipation to the federal government's student aviation program. Teachers told me that the lack of an economic future—the farms can generally support only the eldest son, not the others—and the extreme monotony of farm life on the prairies are the chief reason for considerable enlistment in the armed forces. It is not surprising, therefore, that an unusually high percentage of recruitment in the navy is from Iowa. On Navy Day one whole storefront in the town of Britt was literally plastered with pictures of hometown boys in the fleet. They may want excitement but none is "anxious for war." And they still don't want to be drafted.

SIMON W. GERSON.

Behind the Arrest of Nehru

Three hundred million in Britain's greatest colony strive for freedom. How London deals with their aspirations. Thousands arrested and interned. Gandhi's role.

THE decision of Gandhi and his supporters in the leadership of the Indian National Congress to withdraw the threat of mass civil disobedience and limit the struggle for independence to passive resistance has come as a great surprise to many observers. The clue to this, Mr. Gandhi's latest change of tactics, and much else in recent Indian history, lies in an understanding of the basic geometry of the forces operating in India—the triangular conflict of British imperialism versus the Indian bourgeoisie versus the peasants, industrial workers, and lower middle class of India—and the tensions arising out of the war.

The profound dislocation and demands arising out of the present war have somewhat modified the classical British policy of restraining the growth of industry in India by means of tariff control and the manipulation of exchange rates. This modification was alluded to last winter by Sir Jeremy Raisman, finance member of the government of India, when, in the course of a broadcast from New Delhi, he declared: "India is no doubt one of the countries, and the present is one of the times, in which a war is productive of certain advantages."

REASONS

There have been very important reasons for this modification of policy. The threatened invasion of England, the Italo-German drive toward Suez, and increasing Japanese activity in Southeast Asia have all emphasized the vulnerability of an empire whose economic life is highly centralized and dependent on long lines of communication. The desire on the part of Great Britain to overcome this was the *raison d'être* of the "Eastern Group Conference" held at New Delhi on Oct. 25, 1940. Plans were laid whereby India, Burma, Malaya, South Africa, East Africa, New Zealand, Australia, and other possessions in the new British economic zone east of the Suez Canal might expand existing and potential resources to provide an economic base for the war machine in the Near East and concurrently supply funds for purchases abroad, particularly in the United States, by increasing production for export.

As a consequence of these developments, the iron and steel industry in India is working at full capacity and plans are laid to push the production of steel from the prewar level of 900,000 tons to 1,250,000 tons. In June the government announced the allocation of £250,000 for the expansion of arsenals. Skilled craftsmen have been conscripted for war industries. Rifles, machine-guns, 6-inch guns and 6-inch howitzers, small arms, ammunition, and shells, as well as structural steel for Near Eastern fortifications, are being produced. The

Indian Aircraft Company, with a capital of £3,750,000, is erecting a factory at Bangalore to build warplanes under expert American supervision. The Indian branches of the General Motors and Ford organizations are expanding their assembly plants to provide the military authorities with an additional 25,000 motor vehicles a year. The Indian chemical industry is turning out a wide variety of war-time needs. Shipyards in Bombay and along the Hooghly are busy building naval and merchant vessels. At the end of July arrangements were completed for the establishment of an aluminum industry in North Travancore to meet the needs of the expanding munitions and armaments industries, and arrangements were made to exempt alumina imports into India from tariff duty for a limited period. As a consequence of these activities, India's manufacture of war supplies has increased twelve-fold.

The same process is occurring in subsidiary industries. The jute industry has received orders for over £8,000,000 of material, and already over a million Indian jute sandbags are cushioning Great Britain against air attacks. The entire output of the Indian woolen mill industry has been taken over for British military requirements, while the shoe industry has received an order for £720,000 worth of army boots, to be manufactured at the rate of 125,000 pairs monthly.

In the course of this industrial expansion and increased purchases of Indian raw materials, a relatively small group of Indian bankers, industrialists, and speculators, with a disparate political influence, have been drawn closer to London on the basis of their share in the profits being harvested. This dual process of increasing profits and closer collaboration was indicated in the financial report of the chairman of the National Bank of India who last spring announced a 16 percent dividend and declared that the bank had invested over £13,000,000 in British and Indian government securities. There is little doubt that the desire to wean increasing sections of the Indian bourgeoisie away from nationalism has been an important consideration in this seemingly generous part of British policy. On the other hand, there is no guarantee that if

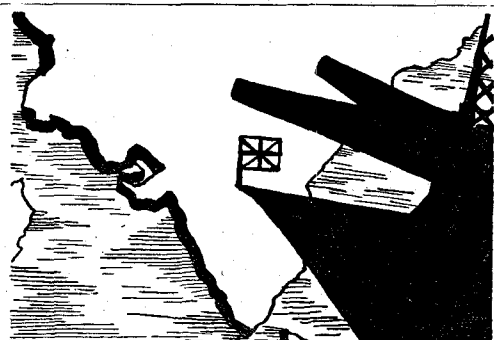
and when the present emergency is over, these temporary concessions will not be withdrawn, very much as they were after the first world war.

In discussing this exploitation of the Indian economy Gandhi declared, in *Harijan* on May 25, 1940, that the resources of India "are being utilized at the will of the British Cabinet . . . and Britain will drain the dependency dry as she has done in the past." He was not as explicit as Sir Jeremy Raisman who, in his above-mentioned broadcast, went on to indicate that it was the human resources of India that were to be drained most severely, when he declared: ". . . we must expect a comparative worsening in the position of the urban industrial population and generally of those classes with fixed incomes."

The first year of the war has demonstrated this to be a very moderate statement. In the jute industry, for example, hours were extended from forty-five to fifty-four and then to sixty as a consequence of the rush of war orders. When the union requested a "dearness allowance" to meet the steep rise in living costs which came with wartime profiteering and increased taxes, the Bengal Millowners Association told the union that it must await the time "when trade conditions improve." War-time burdens were further increased last July by a Viceregal ordinance authorizing employers to make deductions from workers' wages for the purpose of contributing to the war funds. In Cawnpore, scene of the great textile strike in 1938 and many demands for increased wages this past year, a punitive tax, amounting to two weeks' salary per worker, was levied to defray the cost of policing the town.

THE PEASANTS

The peasants, already suffering under the combined burden of a semi-feudal economy and the post-war agricultural crisis, have not escaped. In many areas a levy on every plough has been imposed for the purpose of extracting war contributions. Despite the fact that the price of manufactured goods has risen 25 to 50 percent, any possibility of obtaining better prices for crops has been carefully precluded by government action. Thus, in the first six months of the war, the prices of refined sugar rose by some 25 percent, but the price for sugar cane paid to the peasant cultivator was pegged by the government at 8¾ annas per maund (\$.0066 per pound) and kept there. Later, when the increase in cultivation, made on the promise of better prices, brought down the price of refined sugar, the government pulled the bottom out of the market by withdrawing the fixed price. This enabled the British purchasing commission to get a better price, but it also brought "millions of people . . . to the verge of ruin" according to Nehru.



David

The lower middle class has suffered concurrently. Government employees have had to contend with forced contributions to war funds and the skyrocketing of living costs. With 70 percent of the Indian budget devoted to military expenditures, the quality of the restricted educational opportunities offered Indian students has deteriorated. Small shop owners have suffered with their customers.

The addition of these burdens to those already borne by the overburdened masses of India has not been accepted passively. The drastic censorship of the cables conceals a development of unrest which two-month old newspapers and correspondence reveal as ranking with the great movements of 1919-22 and 1930-31. The chief characteristic has been an unprecedented independence on the part of peasants' and workers' organizations, which have carried on their agitation and activities frequently without the support of the leadership of the Congress, and sometimes in the face of opposition from Congress leaders. Thus, on Oct. 2, 1939, while the Congress leaders were engaged in lengthy diplomatic interchanges with the viceroy, 90,000 Bombay workers carried out a one-day political strike against the war and the repressive measures of the government, the first anti-war mass strike in any of the countries involved in the war. This set off a wave of strikes which affected virtually every industrial town in India.

In the course of defending living standards, there has been a number of notable examples of cooperation among the groups affected. In many districts there were instances of peasants and workers demonstrating together against profiteering. On Independence Day, Jan. 26, 1940, more than fifty factories were halted by strikes, while student strikers closed many schools. Joint strikes against the arrests of labor and student leaders have taken place in Calcutta, Lucknow, and elsewhere. Student "cultural brigades" have toured the countryside. Last March many Bombay shopowners closed their shops in support of the strike of the Girni Kamgar textile union, which was out on strike.

FRICITION

There has been a number of examples of friction between these organizations and certain sections of the leadership of the Congress. Thus, in the above-mentioned textile strike in Bombay, 140,000 textile workers, representing 90 percent of those employed in the industry, were out on strike for six weeks, after demands for a 25 percent wage increase to meet increased living costs had been rejected. The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee was approached for a contribution to strike relief funds, but this was refused. Speakers at the All-India Kisan (peasant) Conference, held at about the same time, attacked the "weak-kneed policy" and the "vacillating and compromising tendencies" of the Congress leadership, calling for the immediate initiation of civil disobedience. Subhas Chandra Bose, energetic leader of the Forward Bloc, moved

closer and closer to these organizations as the Congress leadership rejected his demand for immediate action for independence. At the All-India Conference of the Forward Bloc, held late last spring, he suggested that the Forward Bloc immediately go out into the country with the rallying cry—"all power to the Indian people!"

ARRESTS

Perhaps the best method of indicating the depth and breadth of the storm gathering in India would be to list the names and organizations of the leaders who have been arrested in the course of these struggles. Such a list, however, would double the length of this article and read like a directory of the leaders of the *kisan sabhas* (peasant unions), *mazdoor sabhas* (workers' organizations), the Forward Bloc, the militant Congress Socialist Party, and the States Peoples Conference. Virtually every day during June and July, Nehru's paper, the *National Herald*, filled two or more columns with items on arrests, under the head "The March of Repression." A significant indication of the nature of the movement is the fact that those arrested, with perhaps the exception of Bose, leader of the Forward Bloc, and Dr. Lohia, former Foreign Secretary of the Congress, are not well known outside of India. They do represent, however, a cross-section of the vast network of organizations which cover the Indian subcontinent.

Various techniques have been used in the decapitation of these organizations, with heavy reliance being laid on the elastic provisions of the Defense of India Regulations, under which virtually anything said in opposition to government policies can be construed as a criminal offense. The All-India Kisan Sabha lost three successive general secretaries in this way, beginning with Swami Sahajanand, who died in prison. In other cases, all the leading personnel of organizations were arrested at one fell swoop. Most of those arrested are interned, but in the case of many labor organizers, some are "externed," i.e. banned from sites of former organizing activity, in the czarist manner. Despite the number of these arrests, mounting to over a thousand in Bengal alone, the number of leaders produced by the needs of the time does not seem to be diminishing.

It is necessary, in order to complete our triangle and come to grips with the present problem, to examine how the Indian bourgeoisie regards this growing unrest. The post-war history of India has made it abundantly clear that Indian industry has received concessions from the British when the boycotts of a mass nationalist movement have strengthened its bargaining position. It has also shown that these concessions have frequently been lost when this threat has been removed by the decline of the mass nationalist movement. At the same time, these mass campaigns have had to be built on the basic economic needs of the poverty-stricken Indian population, and have frequently not only run counter to the immediate interests of particular sections of the Indian bourgeoisie but have conjured up the

specter of its ultimate replacement as a class. Indian bankers, landlords, and industrialists realize that British domination has kept them weak in the face of peasant and labor unrest which has advanced at an unparalleled rate and has taken on an increasingly radical character.

It is this contradictory position of the Indian middle class, midway between the most elaborate finance-capitalist domination of the London City on the one side and the lowest level of protesting misery on the other, and requiring and opposing each of them, which has produced the vacillations and compromises that have characterized its every political move. This dilemma is expressing itself in its sharpest form at the present when, as a consequence of British involvement in the war and the strength of the mass movement, the independence of India looms as an active possibility.

BOURGEOIS HOPE

The political reflection of this position has been the necessity of exerting pressure concurrently upon the British and the nationalist movement. In the pursuit of these aims, all the hopes of the Indian bourgeoisie during the past two decades have been fixed on Gandhi as a man able to steer a course midway between the Scylla and Charybdis of imperialism and revolution, unleashing just enough of the mass movement to drive a successful bargain, and at the same time restraining it sufficiently to save India from revolution. Gandhi's own recognition of this course is revealed in a letter to the viceroy on March 2, 1930: "It is my purpose to set in motion that force [non-violence] as well against the organized . . . force of the British rule as the unorganized . . . force of the growing party of violence."

The political instrument of bourgeois policy has been "non-violence" or "passive resistance" turned on and off at the dictate of Gandhi. Every time a mass non-violence campaign has gotten under way which threatens to shift the direction of the goal, Gandhi has balked. Thus in the Bardoli decision which Gandhi extracted from the Congress Working Committee on Feb. 12, 1922, civil disobedience was called off three days after the viceroy sent the following telegram to the secretary of state for India:

The lower classes in the towns have been seriously affected by the non-cooperation movement. . . . In certain areas the peasantry have been affected, particularly in parts of the Assam Valley, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and Bengal. . . . A large proportion of the Mohammedan population throughout the country are embittered and sullen. . . . The government are prepared for disorder of a more formidable nature than has in the past occurred, and do not seek to minimize in any way the fact that great anxiety is caused by the situation.

In 1931 the Gandhi-Irwin agreement also cut off the civil disobedience movement at a time when it was reaching its height. In it not a single concrete step toward self-government was realized except the right of peaceful boycott, an important weapon in the armory of

native millowners. At the present, preparations for a mass civil disobedience campaign have been called off, but not before there was adequate testimony of the potentialities of such a movement under present conditions. Gandhi himself revealed the significance of this factor in his considerations, in a statement in *Harijan* last January:

It has been suggested to me by a Congressman wielding great influence that as soon as I declared civil disobedience I would find a staggering response this time. The whole labor world and the kisans [peasants] in many parts of India will, he assures me, declare a simultaneous strike. . . . I told him that if that happened I should be most embarrassed and all my plans would be upset. . . . I hope I am not expected knowingly to undertake a fight that must end in anarchy and red ruin.

It is perhaps not insignificant that Gandhi's declaration on September 18 that "civil disobedience would be definitely restricted to freedom of speech, provided it is absolutely non-violent" was revealed to the world at a press interview in the Bombay mansion of Rameshwar Das Birla, multi-millionaire Indian industrialist and friend of Gandhi.

Gandhi's support for Britain, expressed as a "desire not to embarrass" the British war effort, despite the fact that neither the British nor their opponents are using "non-violence," is explainable as an admission that non-violence cannot be effective for the protection of India, or an indication that British bayonets are still desired to maintain internal as well as external security, or a reflection of the desire on the part of the bourgeoisie to put off the final struggle, apparently in the hope that during the war, as a result of the growth and "Indianization" of the army and the expansion of industry, the Indian middle class will strengthen its position with regard to both its opponents. It may contain elements of all three.

This compromise, expressing itself as a desire to put off any final struggle for power, cannot have any stable basis unless the Indian bourgeoisie is willing to abdicate its leadership of the nationalist movement, which is extremely dubious. The instability of this compromise is based mainly on the fact that London is not actually making any major concession to the Indian bourgeoisie as a whole, and is, on the contrary, excluding them from the main fields of profit making. Thus the expansion of the chemical industry in India is strengthening the position of the British trust, Imperial Chemical Industries. The establishment of the aluminum industry in Travancore is being financed by a syndicate of British and Canadian industrialists. The Tata Iron and Steel Company, which was the leading native industrialist concern outside of the cotton industry, has already passed under the control of the British-owned Bengal Iron Company. Early last spring the Indian government introduced an Excess Profits Tax Bill whose provisions threatened to dislodge Indians from the precarious foothold they have obtained in certain branches of industry by discriminating in favor of the larger firms, generally under



"But if Hitler ever got to India wouldn't Nehru be imprisoned?"

British control. About the same time a statement by the Governor of the Reserve Bank revealed plans to legalize more than half of the "non-scheduled" banks, a field predominantly occupied by Indian banking capital. In the army the British have been careful to recruit their officers from the feudal nobility, and have further safeguarded against losing control by exploiting language, religious, and geographical differences.

Any attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to compensate for these British encroachments by intensifying the exploitation of the remainder of the population would be to commit the same type of mistake made by Chiang Kai-shek and the Shanghai bankers and industrialists in 1927. A step in this direction would not only encourage the intensification of British domination, but would also result in the surrender of the most important weapon in the hands of the Indian bourgeoisie—the leadership of the nationalist movement. At the same time it is important to realize that this

mass unrest cannot be stopped unless the economic strains producing it are alleviated.

This, then, is the position of the Indian bourgeoisie. To postpone the struggle or to become the police agent of the British is to retreat still further economically and to abdicate the leadership of the nationalist movement. Retention of the leadership of the Indian nationalist movement under present conditions must be postulated on an alleviation of the hard lot of the Indian masses by withdrawing India from the war, or by forcing British investors in India to foot the bill for the defense of their £1,000,000,000 investment—either of which must mean a resolute struggle with the cooperation of the masses.

In any case, the decision is a difficult one, made doubly so by the war situation. If the news about Gandhi and the Congress leadership is confused and contradictory, it is merely because Mr. Gandhi cannot decide with which angle of the triangle to make common cause.

ANDREW ROTH.

Fixing Brains for War

Some nabobs of the American Psychiatric Association want to mobilize their profession for the slaughter. Their theory and their program. Who's a psychopath?

ONLY a few weeks after the outbreak of war abroad, the program committee of the American Psychiatric Association arranged a special session on "psychiatry and military mobilization" for the association's annual congress. At the same time personal questionnaires asking for military and biographic information were sent to psychiatrists throughout the country; district leaders were assigned to see that the organization of this information proceeded efficiently. A field representative of the influential National Committee for Mental Hygiene began to contact high government and military officials to impress upon them the importance of psychiatry in wartime. At the Psychiatric Congress held in May, a Canadian was elected to the presidency and a pro-British resolution was pushed through. At a meeting of the American Neurological Association held in June another pro-British resolution was passed. Dr. Foster Kennedy, a British-born neurologist, made an address in which he attacked a petition opposing war and urging the maintenance of peace which had been signed by 500 scientists and sponsored by the American Association of Scientific Workers. One of the signers, Prof. Anton J. Carlson, the distinguished physiologist and honored guest of the gathering, left the meeting in protest.

These developments were not sudden. A newly endowed journal called *Psychiatry*, edited by a group of Washington, D. C., psychiatrists, has for some time past been particularly open and active in urging a closer coordination of psychiatry with government policies. It has published a number of articles on military defense and propaganda reflecting the feeling among many leading psychiatrists that their profession was belittled or neglected in the first world war. As long ago as February of last year *Psychiatry* featured an article on "The Utilization of Psychiatry in the Armed Forces" by Assist. Surg. Gen. Dallas G. Sutton of the US Navy, who stated that "the scope of psychiatric endeavor will be materially extended in the event of another national emergency," and quoted with approval a memorandum put out by the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation. Since this memorandum presents a fairly complete outline of the plans of these psychiatric circles it may be quoted at some length. It says:

War is a unitary performance of the whole people. The processes going on in the "home front" must be coordinated exactly with the combat arm; the entire socio-economic structure has to be united in prosecuting a war and this requires a great many integrating administrative activities. . . . Personalities already heavily burdened by anxiety are apt to break down under this stress and to be

disabled by acute anxiety states, the so-called shell-shock, or by panic. The prevention of these acute disturbances is the more important because of their "psychic contagiousness," to disable others whose feeling of personal security is threatened from within. This calls for immediate effective therapy or prompt evacuation of all affected personnel. . . . The production and maintenance of morale is a psychiatric problem that affects the whole nation at arms, the worker and farmer, the parent and teacher, the civilian administrative personnel, the executive departments, as the entire military and naval establishment. . . ."

The author goes on to say that in the event of mobilization mental defectives are suitable for service but "psychopaths" may prove to be troublesome:

The writer's experience throughout a period of some years points to the fact that the psychopath has more difficulty in adjusting to the service than has any other type of questionable individual. A recruit in this classification is not amenable to discipline and he ordinarily cannot comfortably be assimilated in any part of the organization without having an influence on morale. The constitutionally inferior and the medium-grade intellectual types are ordinarily acceptable if properly classified and utilized in the proper locations within the organization. . . ."

Psychiatry is now vigorously sponsoring American participation in the war. A recent editorial asked: "Shall we wait and see how the 'war in Europe' goes? Or shall we give active, unremitting support to our statesmen who can make of us the greatest munitions depot on earth. . . ." In the same issue a particularly crude and hysterical article entitled "National Solidarity" urges the psychiatrist to use his professional status for spying activities. "If he is calmly alert to what goes on," the article states, "he can learn to observe useful data which he can formulate and report to those especially concerned with protecting our internal security. . . ."

There can be little doubt that many anti-war spokesmen will be classed as "radicals" and psychopaths, as they are already classed in some of our hospitals. Perhaps we can learn from the example of Great Britain. The recent files of the *British Medical Journal* indicate that British government circles have been quite alert to the use of psychiatry in wartime. In general these British psychiatric articles brand as abnormal those who do not yield to the brutal and senseless demands of this war; the idea is to render such people innocuous by hospitalization if necessary. This simple purpose is dressed up with all sorts of learned verbiage. Thus one medical correspondent (*British Medical Journal*, Jan. 20, 1940) emphasizes the need

for more mental hospitals since the conscription of the male adolescent population. He believes that the basic psychological mechanism responsible for the war nervousness arises from a conflict between the primitive instinct of self-preservation, and one's higher ideals or self-regarding sentiment. Two other learned authorities in a subsequent series of articles (Feb. 10-24, 1940) advance the view that our normally suppressed, aggressive impulses must be released in wartime (*The New York Daily News* puts it more bluntly: "what we need . . . is a generation of brutes"). The well-balanced individual is supposed to readjust himself to the war demand, whereas the neurotic individual does not. Sir Arthur Hurst (May 11, 1940) suggests that such individuals be labeled "martial misfits." Another writer makes the point quite clear: "No breakdown has yet been seen in a civilian who was a well-adapted personality before the war." ("Panic States in Civilians," *British Medical Journal*, p. 887, June 1, 1940).

All this furnishes a valuable commentary on the perversion of scientific psychology to the aims of a traders' war. But it would be a mistake to think that military psychiatry will operate only with the relatively crude expedient of calling all its enemies crazy. As some of the British articles indicate, there are subtler means at its disposal, i.e., ideas woven into the texture of much of contemporary psychiatric theory. These psychiatric apologists for war say in effect: "War is brutal, but men are brutes and you can't change human nature." The psychological prop for this theory of war is contained in many of Freud's writings. His *Reflections on War and Death*, written during the first world war is worth special attention. Freud begins with the wise observation that in time of war even science becomes a military tool—and then proceeds to do the very thing he deplors. After taking sides with German imperialism ("We live in the hope that impartial history will furnish the proof that the very nation in whose language I am writing and for whose victory our dear ones are fighting has sinned least against the laws of human civilization") he expounds his psychoanalytic theory of war. In substance it amounts to a doctrine of original sin. "The deepest character of war," he writes, "consists of impulses of an elemental kind which are similar in all human beings, the aim of which is the gratification of certain primitive needs. . . . It is conceded that all the impulses which society rejects as evil, such as selfishness and cruelty, are of this primitive nature." To Freud the cultivation of human brutality in wartime merely meant the release of dormant impulses: "The very emphasis

of the commandment: Thou Shalt Not Kill," he wrote, "makes it certain that we are descended from an endlessly long chain of generations of murderers, whose love of murder was in their blood as it is perhaps also in ours. . . . Thus, if we are to be judged by our unconscious wishes, we ourselves are nothing but a band of murderers, just like primitive man. . . ." And finally, "War strips off the later deposits of civilization and allows the primitive man in us to reappear."

The kernel of truth in Freud's theory is that our competitive society does more and more force its more prosperous members to veneer their intensely anti-social and competitive striving with all sorts of high-sounding motives. But Freud missed the fundamental point, that the competitive strivings are not abstract and inborn human characteristics; they are themselves products of a competitive social order and bourgeois family organization. No wonder Freud concluded that war cannot be abolished, and hoped instead for a "superior class of independent thinkers to guide the masses." (See his correspondence with Einstein in 1933, "Why War?")

A senseless reactionary war that calls upon the people for endless sacrifices cannot fail to take its toll of neurotic bitterness and confusion. The exact opposite has been true in the great just wars of national liberation. Dr. Mira, former professor of psychiatry at the University of Barcelona and psychiatrist to the loyalist forces of Spain, told a large audience in New York (at a reception tendered him at the Hotel Commodore Nov. 15, 1939) how the Spanish war brought the people to a new high pitch of vivid enthusiasm and social feeling. Passing through Paris and London in the first months of the present war, he was struck by the contrasting confusion, apathy, and bitterness of the people there.

The lesson is clear: a just war unites the people and enhances the feeling of social cohesion which lies at the core of mental health. The Spaniards knew what they were fighting for.

But the second world war, like the first, is not a people's war. That is why the ruling class is seeking to enlist psychiatrists, who happen to enjoy particular influence on these occasions, in confusing the people as to the nature of the conflict. Yet, in spite of the pronouncements of the psychiatric executives, the rank and file psychiatrists will stand their ground. Those who can see that this is a war of rival imperialist groups from which the people gain nothing, who believe that the way to end war is to end imperialism, are not psychopaths. They have the simple courage of their own good sense. The hysteria can be found among their enemies. Concerning the cases that fall prey to this hysteria we may repeat the unintentionally sound advice of one of our war psychiatrists, ". . . an explanation of the underlying conflict assists in the final adjustment."

HARVEY MERRILL.



Will it work this time?

A. Jamison



AMERICAN RESCUE SHIP MISSION



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The USSR and Germany

MOLOTOV's visit to Berlin is above all symbolic of the new and undeniable power of the first workers' republic in world affairs. In a speech to the Eighth Congress of Soviets just four years ago, Maxim Litvinov spoke of himself as sitting at a "window looking out upon the world." His audience laughed, but there was a bitter overtone in its laughter. For it was the feverish dream of the pigmy statesmen from Clemenceau to Chamberlain that the USSR, one whole sixth of the earth, be somehow isolated from the rest of the world. For this they carved up states, and for this they excluded the USSR from their League of Nations sixteen years. Their attitude toward the USSR merely epitomized their attitude toward the so-called "backward" and semi-colonial peoples. It was this arrogance, mingled with fear, which impelled Sir Neville Henderson to remark in August 1939 that if a pact had to be signed with Moscow he preferred that the Germans sign it. And last week, as Molotov left Berlin, the British Foreign Office let it be known that the USSR had been offered a seat at the peace conference. How characteristic it is of the British Tories that even while they hang on a ledge off Europe, they assume, with fatuous condescension that only his majesty King George can determine the place and conditions of peace!

In a recent editorial, the *New York Times* reproaches Hitler for having "drawn Russia out of her isolation and into the complex of Europe" and even speculates on the effect of this fact on "Germany itself and the Slav nations the Nazis aim to control?" Yes, indeed, this is what causes them dismay. For us therefore, it ought to be a source of satisfaction that even the dominant power in capitalist Europe, the brutal enemy of the working class, cannot reckon its future course without consulting the world representative of working class power.

MOLOTOV'S TRIP APPEARS mysterious only if we persist in mental telepathy: a foolish and sometimes sinister sport. For what is background to the discussions in Berlin? This war, which expresses the deepest crisis as well as the criminal character of world imperialism bids to become a long torture for all of humanity. Germany has achieved the virtual dominion of most of the continent, but in the second winter of its struggle it is already confronted with an Anglo-American

alliance, which has been maturing for six months and became a certainty with Mr. Roosevelt's re-election. Only the other day, William Allen White suggested that the slogan "aid to Britain short of war" be changed to "short of declaring war." Britain continues to resist only by the desperate mobilization of her vast empire, only because American imperialism has become her arsenal and chief moral reserve.

But Germany is blockaded on the continent, and will begin to lose her grip unless she can break out to the great oceans, and reach the oil and cotton of Africa and the Near East. Britain could be broken on the island only at great cost and the conquest might prove pyrrhic; but the island might very well be gained if its jugular veins in the Mediterranean were severed. Thus two new fronts are created: at home and in the Mediterranean. Germany's famous slogan has been "cannon rather than butter" but a time may come, say by next winter, when butter might be a more powerful armament than cannon.

Thus Germany has every interest in expanding fruitful economic relations with the USSR even at the cost of diverting railway and machine tool production from her own needs. On the other hand, in view of the vast intercontinental struggle that now looms up, the USSR proceeds from the principle of business relations with all powers, to develop mutually profitable economic relations with Germany, especially since through no fault of her own, Britain and the United States are practically boycotting the USSR.

AS FOR STRATEGIC QUESTIONS: the old Versailles edifice has collapsed along the Soviet-German frontier. It was the brilliance of Soviet diplomacy that when this collapse became self evident, her leaders did not let the rotten rafters of the Versailles structure fall on their heads. Ignoring Finland for the moment, it would seem that the problems on the Danube river do not differ essentially from the problems all along the thousand miles of Soviet-German frontier. Rumania has been occupied, Yugoslavia is isolated, and Greece is under assault. Since the USSR desires peace in the Balkans, only Bulgaria and Turkey remain strategic centers, and more especially what lies between them, the Dardanelles.

There are roughly two routes to the Near East: one by land across the straits and through Turkey, the other by sea via the Greek harbors and air bases to Syria. Italy and Germany must choose one or another of these routes. Both of them present problems of terrain and politics. While Britain's position in the eastern Mediterranean is difficult it has been improved in the Greek campaign. Germany and Italy on the other hand, if they could overcome Greece, squeeze the British Navy out, and secure the cooperation of France, could avoid the Dardanelles. Since the Soviet Union cannot be indifferent to an attack on Turkey, it is possible that the Germans, recognizing the strength of the Soviet position, will come to the assistance of their ally in the war against Greece. What happens

in the Mediterranean is full of "ifs and buts." They fall wholly within the province of the contending parties, and need not at this time menace nor involve the USSR.

THERE IS MUCH chatter in the press about German intercession with the USSR for a non-aggression pact with Japan. Of course an improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations is always possible, indeed the hopes have always come from Japan's side. But to see it, British and American business must get the consent of their governments are already doing as much for Japan as she could ever expect from Germany. On November 15 *Tass*, the official Soviet news agency specifically discounts a Soviet Japanese agreement in which the USSR would "cease backing the resistance of Chungking." From her two summers' experience with the Soviet Far Eastern army, Japan knows the actual relation of forces in the Pacific, as her past year's southward movement virtually admits. Apart from everything else, it is a flagrant hypocrisy for American liberals to question Soviet assistance to China when their own government has given perhaps one-eighteenth of the help to China that the Soviet people have. Britain and the United States did not begin to worry about Japan until she moved southward. For three years, they have supplied her with more than a billion dollars worth of goods while Soviet-Japanese trade dwindled to a few millions per year.

Even more — those circles in the United States who grind their own anti-Soviet axes by headlining tall tales of a Soviet-German division of the world are only playing the German game. Mr. Goebbels must simply be delighted when American newspapers give the impression that Herr Hitler is capable of slicing up the pie and Mr. Stalin humbly waits for a share of the German world order. The truth is otherwise. Without in any way underestimating the present strength of the contending imperialist forces, and without understating the long struggle which confronts humanity before the old order is swept away, one fact stands out: *that in a world where nations are tearing at each other's throats, the USSR keeps two hundred million people at peace; that in a world where whole peoples have become pawns, the Soviet Union constructs a federation of free peoples; that out of the shambles which imperialism is making of this earth the USSR emerges as the one force prepared to help the working class of Europe and the people of Asia in the reconstruction of world order and world peace.*

Coventry and Taranto

NO one can read about the devastation of the British factory town of Coventry without a sense of deep indignation. It is a horrible business of murder, a terrible revelation of what an "all-out" blitzkrieg can do. While the vast armies of the contending belligerents are immobilized, the civilian population evidently on both sides is suffering beyond words. From American newspaper reactions it is

clearer every day that British production is being undermined by German air attacks, that Churchill is bringing ever more pressure for the fulfillment of Roosevelt's pledges.

On the other hand, we are somewhat skeptical about the sensational report that "half the Italian navy" was sunk off Taranto. With Molotov in Berlin, a convoy badly cut up off Canada, and with the general intensification of the aerial warfare, a Mediterranean victory was sorely needed in London. To any neutral observer a careful reading of Churchill's statement in the House shows that no Italian vessels were actually sunk. One heavy capital ship had "her fore-castle under water . . . and a heavy list to the starboard"; one lighter capital ship was "beached . . . with her stern under water." "It appears probable" that another ship of the same class was "beached and severely damaged," while two cruisers were "listed to the starboard" and two auxiliary vessels were "lying with their sterns under water." Reference to any standard handbook shows that the Italian Navy has four capital ships plus eight cruisers, apart from fifteen light cruisers and about 130 destroyers. Moreover, the damage was done by naval airplanes operating from an aircraft carrier. This is interesting if true, but only once before in this war, in the attack on the French fleet off Oran, have airplane torpedoes sunk battle-ships. But it is true that even a modest damage to the Italian fleet strengthens British naval supremacy in the eastern Mediterranean.

We are also skeptical about Greek "offensives" all along the Albanian front. If the terrain is difficult for the Italians, it must be equally difficult for the Greeks, all the more so outside their own borders. That Italy has bogged down in Macedonia, undoubtedly with great losses, is quite clear. As our article on page six observes, the Greeks have the defensive advantages, but Italy controls the air, as her intensive bombardments of Greek ports indicate, and this will register in the long run. Relatively reliable observers, such as Ralph Barnes of the *New York Herald Tribune*, report conversations with Italian prisoners; it is plain that they did not want this war—which is a factor to be reckoned with, to be sure. But without internal political changes in Greece, plus long-term aid in equipment, we would not place any bets. And we would keep an eye on German troops on the Yugoslav border.

Heat on Mexico

SEVERAL weeks ago President-elect Avila Camacho, of Mexico, canceled his plans to come to Washington. His people vigorously resented the idea of their chief executive doing obeisance to *imperialismo yanqui*. Our State Department, little daunted, worked out an alternative scheme: if the mountain wouldn't come to Mahomet . . . So Vice President-elect Wallace is poring over a Spanish grammar today and on December 1 he will climb over the mountains to Mexico and attend Camacho's induction ceremonies. But the old adage about Greeks bearing gifts is known in the Spanish, too.

For, according to *Hemisphere* this week, our State Department is trying to drive a hard bargain. Washington, we are told, seeks: (1) to merge all Mexican indebtedness to United States into one single, interest-paying debt; (2) a Mexican pledge not to expropriate without advance payment of "adequate compensation"; and (3) permission for the USA to build and control naval and air bases for United States use. According to our informants, the Mexican Cabinet split violently over these issues. Interior Minister Ignacio Garcia Tellez is quoted as having declared: "It is better to die wrapped in the fatherland's flag rather than accept such conditions." Other ministers indicated varying degrees of opposition. The Mexican people are bitter against the squeeze play the Northern Colossus is working and they are balking. The big question is whether Camacho will reflect the will of his people or whether he will crumble under the combined pressures of such indigenous reactionaries as Abelardo Rodriguez and Wall Street's agents in our own State Department.

Far East Typhoon Signals

THERE can be little doubt that Japan is planning new steps for the complete occupation of Indo-China. The continued withdrawal of troops from their precarious hold on the coastal towns of Kwangsi and Kwangtung provinces, while representing victories for China, means that Japan is regrouping her forces for another advance to the south. The new objective is control of Saigon, the strategic port in the southern provinces of Indo-China; demands are being made on the French authorities similar to those which preceded the Japanese occupation of Haiphong. All this has more significance than meets the eye. Apparently continuing their occupation of a French colony, about which very little can be done by other powers, the Japanese are actually approaching within striking distance of the Dutch East Indies and Singapore. They may not take the latter step until the occupation of Saigon is consolidated, but they will be in a much better position to do so.

Evidently Japan is timing her advance with the Anglo-American-Australian discussions. At the moment when Japan feels that the United States is committing itself fully to the assumption of Britain's position in the south Pacific, her ships and troops will move. If we remember that Washington has been sending squadrons and ships westward to Manila, it is clear that an acute diplomatic conflict looms, with Japanese and American forces facing each other. And what is Mr. Roosevelt doing except to mount his guns? Trade with Japan continues on a large scale; little has been done for China, especially by way of loans for munitions; nothing is being done to maintain peace by a working agreement with the USSR. In fact, Washington brazenly permits American (and British) oil companies to enter new contracts with Japan for the sale of oil from the Dutch East Indies. One million eight hundred thousand tons will be sold to Japan in the next year in order—as the

New York Herald Tribune of November 15 writes—"to offset the severance of much of the supplies to Japan from the United States." This is a fourfold increase in oil from the East Indies, and this is being done by British and American businessmen with the express permission of the British Foreign Office and the State Department.

Where will such tactics lead us? We shall either be at war very shortly, or else Japan will be appeased along the lines that Ambassador Joseph Grew has been working on since last winter. But such appeasement will only lead to warfare later on. Instead of defending peace by collective security with China and the Soviet Union, Mr. Roosevelt is pursuing essentially the same course as did Mr. Chamberlain after Hitler marched on Prague. It will have the same criminal results.

Jim Crow in Middy Blouse

THE highest rank to which a Negro may aspire in the US Navy is officers' messman. Two Negro messmen are in prison facing courtmartial; sixteen others are confined to shipboard. The charge? Against the two in prison the navy levels the accusation of insubordination—they protested unbearable treatment. The sixteen protested against the imprisonment of their mates. A letter from three of the confined men is published in the *Pittsburgh Courier* of November 9. Among other things, it says:

We are subjected to being roughly spoken to three-fourths of the time, cursed at sometimes, without a murmur of resentment coming from us. In case of resentment, we are put on report, restricted, fined, or sent to the brig for being insubordinate. . . . The majority of officers seem to think that we Negroes are a race of illiterates who have to have someone standing over them with a whip all the time to tell them what to do. They are the kings, we are the flunkies. . . . We have no side to our story, and if we have, it doesn't do any good anyway. . . .

This is but one sample of the bitter fruit of President Roosevelt's recent order continuing the Jim Crow tradition in the armed forces. Secretary Stimson declares that the policy is "satisfactory" and says he will not change it, in answer to a protest of Federated Hotel Workers Union, Local 356, AFL. Other organizations are rising to defend Negroes against maltreatment and discrimination. A nationwide parley held in Washington last Sunday points out that Negroes are being denied work in war industries. Local committees of the National Negro Congress are active. The American Peace Mobilization is also taking part in this campaign, the object of which is to end the shameful mistreatment of Negroes in the armed forces.

Sloan's Liniment

WHAT Wall Street thinks today may be Washington policy tomorrow. Alfred P. Sloan Jr., chairman of General Motors, spoke Wall Street's mind the other day. He wasn't entirely frank; he cushioned his words, he

appeared to put off the day of evil, he even omitted from his spoken speech something that appeared in the prepared manuscript; yet he could not hide the naked meaning underneath. Speaking of the menace of inflation, he said: "Probably the wage rate presents the greatest danger and the one hardest to control. The principle is sound that the defense program should not be made the occasion for increases in wage rates that cannot, generally speaking, be justified." And the six-day week must come as soon as "the slack of unemployment has been taken up." Also, "the penalty for overtime should be canceled during the emergency to encourage a longer work week"—but this patriotic proposal, Sloan decided, had better not be made out loud.

Alfred P. Sloan is head of a du Pont-Morgan trust. His corporation made profits of \$129,172,490 during the first nine months of this year. This compares with \$109,619,799 in the same period of 1939. Nor have his fellow-tycoons done badly. For instance, twenty-eight steel companies boosted their profits by 211 percent in the first nine months of 1940. The National City Bank reports that for the same period, 350 leading industrial corporations netted \$869,000,000 in 1940 as against \$611,000,000 in 1939, a rise of 42 percent. It is clear that wage increases represent a real danger—to these huge profits.

Just when Sloan and his friends will decide that the slack of unemployment has been taken up and the six-day week is in order, one can only guess. The star-gazers of the Roosevelt administration have been obligingly predicting the disappearance of unemployment within a few months, though the unemployed themselves stubbornly refuse to disappear. And government arsenals and shipyards are already working a forty-eight-hour week despite President Roosevelt's earlier guarantees. When Sloan says that "America today is working a shorter number of hours per week than any other nation," he needs to be reminded that the American worker is producing far more in these shorter hours than the worker of any other nation. Labor Research Association calls attention to a recent study of the Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows that from 1909 to 1939 the productivity of American labor increased 163.6 percent, but the average real hourly earnings rose by only 110.5 percent. Those figures contain an argument of a different kind, which the American workers will have to back up with their organized strength.

Oklahoma Justice

CIVIL LIBERTIES in Oklahoma received a staggering blow on the night of August 17 when Robert Wood, state secretary of the Communist Party, and seventeen others were arrested on charges of criminal syndicalism. Wood was accused of possessing the *Communist Manifesto* and other pamphlets. Bail was fixed at \$100,000 for each prisoner. Twelve were finally indicted; when Wood was tried he was convicted and given the maximum sentence of ten years in jail and \$5,000 fine. He and the others still face the

charge of membership in the Communist Party.

The progressive forces of Oklahoma, rallied by the International Labor Defense and aided by liberals throughout the country, are beginning to fight back. Under their pressure, the exorbitant bail was reduced. Pending appeal, Wood has been freed on \$15,000 bond, supplied by many individuals. A total of \$47,000 has been raised and all but two of the prisoners are temporarily at liberty.

A conference to defend constitutional liberties met in Oklahoma City last week. It included representatives of the YWCA, the Presbyterian and other churches, heads of all departments in the state university, including the dean of religion, representatives of trade unions and farmers' organizations, editors of two liberal newspapers. Against these liberals, chief prosecutor Lewis R. Morris roared: "Who's squawking about these bums in the jail house? A few hopped-up preachers and college professors?"

Despite these rifts in the clouds, much remains to be done if these men and women, trade unionists, relief workers, old-time Americans are not to be railroaded. Victory in the Oklahoma cases is dimly in sight, but trials are still to be held, appeals taken. The ILD's good fight deserves—and needs—support.

The Ineffable Mr. Kennedy

MR. JOSEPH KENNEDY, the first Irish ambassador to Great Britain, and one of the many envoys floating around the country thousands of miles from their posts, has created another sensation. He is causing no end of embarrassment to those circles who would like to get us into the war tomorrow. He has cast a great deal of light on the state of mind of those sections of the American ruling class who are ready to support Britain just so far, and no further, who join with Roosevelt in fascism at home, who reckon on meeting Mr. Hitler halfway but not in war. On November 9 Mr. Kennedy gave an interview to a friendly reporter, Louis M. Lyons of the *Boston Globe*. There is little question of the authenticity of the interview, for Ralph Cogan, editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, was present along with a subordinate. Kennedy subsequently insisted that his remarks were "off the record," but it takes little sophistica-

tion to realize that his interview was deliberately intended to get his ideas across while his disavowal merely keeps the record straight and saves his irate confreres in Washington.

"Democracy is finished in England," the ambassador said, and the labor men at the center of government merely meant that "national socialism is coming out of it." "The whole reason for aiding England," Kennedy is quoted, "is to give us time . . . as long as she is in there, we have time to prepare. It isn't that she's fighting for democracy, that's the bunk . . . But we don't have to be drawn into the war." Not if we are coldly realistic. "The two greatest bankers in the world are Montagu Norman and Hjalmar Schacht," thought Kennedy, and in another breath "Lindbergh isn't crazy either, you know."

But perhaps the most interesting remark was Kennedy's reason for supporting Roosevelt: "I supported Roosevelt because I feel he's the only man who can control the groups who have got to be brought along in what's ahead of us." "Do you mean the men who control industry?" he was asked. "No," Kennedy replied, "They have a stake that they've got to defend. I mean the have-nots. They haven't any stake of ownership. They've got to take it whatever faces us."

Kennedy's *faux pas* illumines the program of the appeasers, who are equally reactionary with the men that want to rush us into the war. Kennedy and his crowd don't want to bail out the British empire; they want to take it over even more quickly than Mr. Roosevelt has. And they will be "realistic" about which-ever power controls the continent of Europe. There is an alternative which is just as disastrous for democracy as Mr. Roosevelt's.

The Teachers Fight Back

THE Rapp-Coudert committee's attack on the teachers of New York (discussed by Bruce Minton in *NEW MASSES* of November 12) is meeting with strong resistance. The New York Conference for Inalienable Rights, supported by outstanding civic leaders, clergymen, educators, and trade unionists, has issued a protest against the attempt to curb educational facilities and limit the civil rights of teachers in New York state. A large mass meeting called by the Teachers Union demonstrated the desire of the membership to fight the case to a finish. A number of CIO and AFL unions have condemned the highhanded procedures of Mr. Coudert's one-man committee.

Having failed to intimidate the union into handing over its membership lists, Mr. Coudert is now attempting to harass individual union members. He insists that persons appearing before him sign a waiver of immunity; he refuses to let counsel appear with them. Significantly, he has subpoenaed individuals who have been outstanding in the struggle for academic freedom and teaching tenure. These individuals are standing on their legal rights and are refusing to testify under the arbitrary circumstances of the committee's operation. The resolute stand of Locals 5 and 537 of the



American Federation of Teachers has earned the sympathy and support of the public, which recognizes that this fight is also its own.

Church and State

IT is interesting to note that Senator Coudert also sponsored a bill in the New York state legislature last year which menaces the traditional separation of secular and religious education in America. The Coudert-McLaughlin bill enabled local school boards to "release" pupils one hour each week for religious instruction. Last week, the New York City Board of Education, by a vote of five to one, decided to apply this law to the city schools, despite the protest of alarmed parents, educators, and religious leaders.

The inevitable result of the practice instituted by the Board will be to emphasize racial and religious differences and to create a spirit of intolerance. It introduces into the classroom matters of private conscience, and it requires teachers to act as monitors of religious feeling. It thereby violates the whole intention and spirit of a democratic school system. The issue is not the desirability of religious instruction as such. The issue is whether such instruction is to be confused with the non-sectarian training which is the foundation of America's free schools.

The truth is that the public was not consulted about this shameful departure from the principle of separation of church and state. As the meaning of the situation sinks in, the public will insist that the Board of Education revoke its action. Our schools will not be free from divisive quarrels, suspicion, bigotry, and snooping until this ruling is reversed.

Noxious Col. Knox

THE tongue in President Roosevelt's cheek is back in place again. The election being safely past, the peace talk has been poured down the rathole, and once more the incendiary spirit of the President's Charlottesville speech is given free rein. Down in Havana US Ambassador George S. Messersmith—undoubtedly with the approval of the State Department—last week sounded off as follows:

For us, therefore, there is equally no choice and it is only a question as to whether we shall leave the choice of the moment to them [the totalitarian states] or whether we shall determine for ourselves when aggression, which so definitely threatens us, shall be stopped. . . .

Most bellicose of the administration spokesmen is the Republican Secretary of the Navy, Frank A. Knox. Roaring like the bull of Basham, Knox in speech after speech verbally puts a chip on his shoulder and dares Hitler to knock it off. At Boston, in an extemporaneous address broadcast nationally and internationally, Knox manhandled the election results by saying they showed "the American people cannot be scared into an attempt to preserve peace in an unworthy way." Later he shouted: "What we will not do is appease anybody on earth"—just one day after Ameri-

can and British concerns had, with the sanction of their governments, agreed to appease Japan by supplying her with Netherland Indies oil. And Knox hypocritically blamed public opinion for the administration's failure to aid China, though it is well known that public opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of a complete embargo on Japan and substantial assistance to China long before the outbreak of the European war. At the same time this high official of the Roosevelt administration slandered a friendly power, the Soviet Union.

The administration, of course, is not contenting itself with talk. Since the election, it has turned over to Britain the No. 2 American plane bombsight which embodies some of the provisions of the secret bombsight that is still presumably being held back; it has agreed to send a number of flying fortresses; it is putting the finishing touches on an agreement for the use of British bases at Singapore and in the Pacific; it is making passes at French-owned Martinique; it has begun through William Allen White's Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies to prepare the ground for repealing the ban on credits and loans in the Neutrality and Johnson acts. And all this has the advance blessing of Wendell Willkie and the Republican Party. Clearly, the people themselves will have to enforce the mandate for peace which they gave in the elections.

Appeasement in the NLRB

THE appointment of Dr. Harry A. Millis to succeed J. Warren Madden on the National Labor Relations Board continues the Roosevelt administration's trend toward appeasement of big business. It overthrows the progressive majority that has existed on the Board since its establishment five years ago and creates a new majority which the enemies of labor will find far more amenable. President Roosevelt's fifth columnist, William Leiserson, who was appointed last year, now has a political twin, and between the two they are expected to keep the ball away from Edwin S. Smith, the lone progressive holdover.

Millis in his philosophy of labor relations is of the same "mediator" school as Leiserson; this school holds that labor laws can best be enforced through constant compromise by which the workers are persuaded to accept a steadily dwindling half a loaf. Just how far Millis and Leiserson will go in perverting the intent of the National Labor Relations Act remains to be seen. Interpretation is nine-tenths of any law. There was nothing wrong with Section 7-A of the NIRA except that the Roosevelt administration, at that time still honeymooning with big business, interpreted it to suit the needs of the industrialists. And there is nothing in the letter of the present Labor Relations Act to prevent it from being similarly interpreted. A war-bent administration, which is handing out fat contracts to the Fords and Girdlers, is evidently determined to end this nonsense about making them bargain collectively with their workers. But the labor movement will have something to say on that matter too.

Election Postscript

TAKING stock again of the election results, there were encouraging trends to be noted in various localities. For one thing, the breakdown of old-party loyalties manifested itself in an increased tendency to split the vote. Republican governors and senators were elected in some states which were won by President Roosevelt, and Democratic governors and senators were chosen in states which gave pluralities to Willkie. Had there been a Farmer-Labor Party in the field, it could have directed this sentiment for political independence into progressive channels.

Secondly, though for the most part the basic issue of war or peace was blurred, wherever the people were faced with what appeared to be a clearcut choice, they demonstrated their desire for peace. Thus, in Montana Jeannette Rankin, former congresswoman who voted against American participation in the last war, was elected to the House over Jerry O'Connell, who backed the President's foreign policy. In Illinois, which was carried by Roosevelt, C. Wayland Brooks, Republican isolationist, was elected over Democratic Sen. James M. Slattery. In New Jersey James R. W. Cromwell, one of the most blatant administration warmongers, was snowed under by Republican Sen. Warren Barbour, though the state was carried by Roosevelt and also elected a Democratic governor. It is significant, too, that every opponent of the President's foreign policy in the Senate was returned to office; among them were Republicans who ran in states that gave pluralities to Roosevelt. True, most of the Roosevelt supporters were also returned, but the administration lost—besides Slattery in Illinois—its assistant leader, Sen. Sherman Minton of Indiana. Of course, most of these isolationists can hardly be considered genuine defenders of the people's interests, but their election does indicate a significant trend.

Among the bright spots were California and Washington. The four California members of the House who voted against conscription were returned with comfortable majorities. But the only Democrat who voted for conscription, Rep. Frank Havenner, was defeated. An outstanding local victory was won in Los Angeles County where the voters ended the corrupt twelve-year rule of District Attorney Buron Fitts, notorious labor-baiter, by electing in his place former Rep. John F. Dockweiler, who had AFL and CIO support. In Washington the entire progressive slate of six United States representatives and one senator, who had been endorsed by the Washington Commonwealth Federation, was elected. The proposal for a state old age pension of \$40 monthly was also passed with votes to spare.

Isolated reports of the Communist vote confirm our statement of last week that it registered substantial increases. In California final figures on the vote for Anita Whitney, candidate for United States Senator, are expected to top the 98,791 which she polled as candidate for state controller in 1938.

Readers' Forum

Save Luiz Carlos Prestes

NEW MASSES is happy to publish the following letter signed by prominent Americans asking President Vargas to release Luiz Carlos Prestes from a Brazilian prison. Last week in her column Ruth McKenney spoke for all the editors when she said, "A man waits in a faraway prison cell, waits for you to summon up out of your strength the word that will save him. I think you cannot refuse him." —The Editors

MR. PRESIDENT: As Americans, we are deeply concerned with the welfare and progress of our own country as well as of those of all the Americas. We believe that in freedom of thought and opinion lies the basis toward this end, that the infringement upon democratic rights in one country cannot but imperil democracy elsewhere. It is in this spirit that we respectfully appeal to you for the release of Luiz Carlos Prestes, honorary chairman of the National Liberation Alliance of Brazil and outstanding leader of the Latin American people.

The contribution of Prestes to justice and liberty in Latin America is recognized and recorded in the history of text books of many countries. He has won the respect and admiration of all the forward looking people of this hemisphere.

In the tradition of Bolivar, Toussaint l'Ouverture, Marti, San Martin, O'Higgins, Juarez, and Tiradentes, he believed in and worked for the development of democratic institutions and processes in Brazil.

Yet, Luiz Carlos Prestes has languished in a Brazilian prison for the past five years. To add to his torture, Prestes' wife has been deported to Germany where in a concentration camp she gave birth to their daughter, whom Prestes has never seen. His crime was opposition to reaction and to the fascist movement led by Plinio Salgado. Be it noted that Salgado, who organized an abortive *coup d'etat* against your government in 1937, is enjoying the freedom denied to Prestes.

History has demonstrated that the democratic existence and national sovereignty of a people are essentially dependent on the democratic liberties of all; that the security of a nation is seriously endangered when the democratic unity of its citizens is undermined. We earnestly appeal to you, Mr. President, to grant general amnesty and to restore his freedom to Luiz Carlos Prestes as a symbol of the democratic unity of the Brazilian people and of the peoples of all the Americas against any type of foreign domination. We do so in the firm conviction that his release will serve the cause of democracy and liberty in the western hemisphere.

(Signed): Prof. Clifford McAvoy, deputy commissioner of welfare, New York City; Bishop Francis J. McConnell, the Methodist Church; Dr. Peter F. Amoroso, commissioner, Department of Correction, New York City; Justice Otto Bock, Supreme Court, Denver, Colo.; Prof. Franz Boas, Columbia University; Judge M. A. Bratland, district judge, Minnesota; Prof. Confort Adams, Harvard University; Dr. T. Addis, Stanford Medical School, San Francisco; Rabbi Michael Alper; Prof. Frank E. Baker, president, Milwaukee State Teachers College; Prof. Joseph Warren Beach, University of Minnesota; Dr. Ernest P. Boas, New

York City; Rev. Clarence E. Boyer, Madison Square Church House, New York City; William Blake, writer, New York City; Esther Lucile Brown, Russell Sage Foundation, New York City.

Van Wyck Brooks, writer, New York City; Prof. Morris L. Cohen, College of the City of New York; Prof. Albert Sprague Coolidge, Harvard University; Dean William Grant Chambers, Pennsylvania State College; Prof. Jerome Davis, New School for Social Research; Miss Frances R. Grant, president, Pan American Women's Association; Robinson Jeffers, poet, Carmel, Calif.; Robert F. Galbreath, president, Westminster College, Pa.; Dashiell Hammet, writer, New York City; Rockwell Kent, artist, New York City; Dr. John A. Kingsbury, New York City; Joseph Lhevinne, musician, New York City; Rev. Donald G. Lothrop, Community Church, Boston; Mrs. William S. Ladd; Prof. Robert S. Lynd, Columbia University.

Dr. Carl Menninger, Topeka, Kan.; Wallingford Riegger, musician, New York City; Prof. Walter Rautenstrauch, Columbia University; Muriel Rukeyser, poet and writer; Dr. Harlow Shapley, director, Harvard Observatory, Harvard University; Maxwell Stewart, editor, the *Nation*; George Soule, editor, the *New Republic*; Oswald Garrison Villard, editor, writer; Justice James A. Wolfe, Supreme Court, Utah; Isobel Walker Soule, writer; Prof. Raymond Walsh, Hobart College; James Waterman Wise, writer; Thornton Wilder, Connecticut; Benjamin Alper, writer, New York City; Prof. Luton Ackerson, New York University.

Prof. Francis Birch, Harvard University; Rev. Ralph E. Blount, Oak Park, Ill.; Prof. Ruth Benedict, Columbia University; Prof. E. A. Burtt, Cornell University; Prof. Edwin Berry Burgum, New York University; Dr. M. Curti, Columbia University; Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, president, New History Society; Prof. Ephraim Cross, City College, New York City; George Dillon, poet, Chicago; Prof. Cora DuBois, Sarah Lawrence College; Prof. Horace B. Davis, Simmons College, Massachusetts; Prof. Horace A. Eaton, Syracuse University; Prof. Edward Fulbruegger, University of Newark; Prof. John P. Foley, Jr., George Washington University; Prof. Royal Wilbur France, Rollins College, Florida.

Rev. Ralph Grieser, Epworth Methodist Church, Whitestone, New York; Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie, Chicago Congregational Union; Prof. Horace Grenell, Sarah Lawrence College; Prof. James J. Gibson, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.; Dr. Sheldon Glueck, sociologist; Prof. Selig Hecht, Columbia University; Rolfe Humphries, writer; Prof. Chester Lloyd Jones, University of Wisconsin; John Paul Jones, Union Church of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn; Prof. Otto Klineberg, Columbia University; Dr. R. L. Kahn, University of Wisconsin; Leo Loeb, Washington New Medical School; George Marshall, economist, New York City; Caroline B. Manns, Washington, D. C.

Anita Marburg, Sarah Lawrence College; Prof. M. F. Montagu, University of Pennsylvania; Prof. Norman Maier, University of Michigan; Kenneth W. Porter, Vassar College; Prof. Louis Weisner, Hunter College, New York City; Prof. Eda Lou Walton, New York University; Theodore Ward, playwright; Prof. Carl Wittke, Oberlin College; Prof. Paul E. Gemmill, University of Pennsylvania; Dean M. McConn, New York University; Reid Robinson, president, International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers; Abraham Isserman, lawyer; Rev. Elthered Brown, Jamaica Progressive League; Prof. Lyman R. Bradley, New York University; Fielding Burke, writer; Thomas E. Casey, secretary, Wisconsin State Conference on Social Legislation.

Edward T. Cheyfitz, national secretary, National Association of Die Casting Workers; Martha Dodd, writer; Daniel Driessen, American Communication Association; W. A. Domingo, president, West Indian National Council; Franklin Folsom, executive secretary, League of American Writers; Paul Green, Furniture Workers of America; Dr. Al Goldwater, New York City; Donald Henderson, general president, United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America; Charles Hendley, president, Local 5 American Federation of Teachers, New York City; Mercedes Spier, New York City; Bruno Lasker, Council for Pacific Relations; Dr. W. L. Mahaney, Jr., Philadelphia; H. P. Osborne, secretary, West Indian National Council; Harvey O'Connor, writer, Chicago; Geraldine O'Connell, president, Domestic Workers Union, New York City.

William Pickens, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Rev. Paul H. Streich, New York City; Prof. Margaret Schlauch, New York City; Prof. Howard Selsam, Brooklyn College; Prof. Bernhard J. Stern, Columbia University; Dr. Hope R. Stevens, president, Manhattan Council, National Negro Congress; George Seldes, writer, editor *In Fact*; Dr. Charles Petione, Caribbean Union; John Hyde Preston, writer, Connecticut; Dr. Dwight Bradley, Jr., Council for Social Action; Judge Robert W. Kenny, Los Angeles; Prof. M. Choukas, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H.; Prof. Ernest R. Hilgard, Stanford University; Prof. Hans Otto Storm, Stanford University; Prof. Ellsworth Huntington, Yale University; Rev. Fred E. Maxey, Leeds, Ala.; Prof. Colston E. Warne, Amherst, Mass.; Benjamin C. Marsh, Peoples Lobby, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Harry F. Ward, Union Theological Seminary; Donah Litt-hauer, psychologist, Hebrew Orphan Asylum.

A Bit of History

TO NEW MASSES: The speech which President Roosevelt made on Armistice Day from Arlington Cemetery is one of the most remarkable documents in American history. On this particular occasion, if on no other, I believe that the people of America had the right to demand of their President a wisdom, an honesty, a courage, and an understanding which would justify his breaking a great American tradition. Instead, he displayed so palpable an inability to grasp the fundamentals of the major problem now facing this country that I tremble to think of the new bloody holocaust into which he may take us.

By what right did he tell us—in the face of historical truth—that England, in its mission of democracy-spreading, discarded conquest? It will be news to the people of South Africa, who were first introduced to the technics of the concentration camp by British militarism. It will be news to the hundreds of thousands of India, victims of imperialistic conquest. And it will be news to the Chinese coolies and peasants who were pounded to bits by the practiced and gentlemanly gunnery of his majesty's sailors. And by what right does he brand "unpatriotic" those men who have unflinchingly told us what all the world some day will know—that the World War was never a fight for democracy?

Is it possible that President Roosevelt is ignorant of the fact that many of the major newspapers of America—these same newspapers which are so loudly hawking their wares again—have publicly declared that American participation in that war was a tragic error? Even our high school boys and girls are beginning to know the truth; and lest the President lay this to "Communists," I

should like to quote Mr. James Truslow Adams' *Record of America* (page 490), a textbook for high schools:

"The race for overseas possessions, which had made the period from 1880 on so markedly imperialistic, had been but one expression of the new demands for sources of raw materials and for markets as outlets for manufactured products. The European balance of power, always rather delicately poised, had been subjected to new stresses and strains. . . . When we consider the broader causes and those tensions which sooner or later would have caused an upset of the equilibrium, it is somewhat difficult to apportion the blame between nations."

That is not Earl Browder speaking, but an eminent and respectable New England Brahmin. I am not a moralist, but I find it difficult to evade the feeling that history will some day deal justly with the President's document. Nor do I think it will take a hundred years, or fifty, or twenty-five. I think, and feel, and hope that in a far shorter time I will be able to teach my classes the truth about American history.

AN AMERICAN TEACHER.

New York City.

Resistance in Washington

TO NEW MASSES: I have just finished reading "It's Happened in Washington," by Julian Webb, in your issue of November 19, and feel that Mr. Webb has been somewhat too finite—if that is possible—in his conclusions. Washington is changing, yes. On the surface it is quite possible to observe all that Mr. Webb has seen here where war is being made to order—and not at cut prices. But the subjective impressions of the article overbalance the fact that in the capital, as elsewhere the majority of the people face the future resolutely and are determined not to let the civilization-extinguishers put out the fires of democracy.

To vary my criticism—it is possible to see dictographs behind wall pictures and Gestapo agents when the gas man calls—but it is also possible to meet with, and move with, large groups of organized Americans in trade unions and progressive organizations, to happen upon members of delegations committed to a peace policy, to find (though rarely, as yet) people who will discuss the war and the future optimistically and openly—even congressmen who are in the opposition: the opposition which is loyal to the peacetime ideals of our country.

Not that Mr. Webb is not correct in his general observations. But another picture is needed. It has not yet happened in Washington, and if we keep on fighting, it may not—will not—come to pass.

J. T. CARSON.

Washington, D. C.

"My Number Was Called"

TO NEW MASSES: When the conscription bill was being discussed in Congress, New MASSES published an article telling what it would mean. Now I am the guinea pig. My number is one of the first and I'm "it."

The trouble is, I've only myself to blame. For the last five years I've been putting away a little each month, as they told me to do down at the bank. My father and mother are not technically dependents—they have a small store which manages to get by (so far, anyway), and although I lived with them and put up some of the money for the expenses, now they can possibly get along without me. They own their little house, the first floor of which is the store. So the government won't

consider them dependents and I'll be free to march up and down fields and wear a uniform and learn how to maneuver.

My boss slapped me on the back when I told him the news and congratulated me and promised me my job back in a year. A year is a long time these days. Perhaps I'll get out, but it looks as if I have a better chance to be a hero in the war that is just around the corner. And so far as my job goes—a junior executive hasn't much assurance that the boss's memory will last that long. I remember my uncle sitting around my parents' house after the last war, coughing into his handkerchief and waiting for the job that had been saved for him when he left. He waited a year, not able to get other work; then he got a job in a plant, and soon after went to a base hospital where he had a fine time until he died of tuberculosis.

I've been a constant reader of NEW MASSES for a few years. I don't talk about the way I feel—after all, the boss promised to save the job. I have to tell someone, somewhere—so I tell you and I hope you tell your readers. Not all the draftees are celebrating and thanking their lucky stars they were caught. I wonder if even a majority are feeling so lucky? Or even a large minority? Or even any considerable number?

Repeal the conscription law! Keep us out of the trenches before they stick us into them. And these aren't just slogans. As one who will be right up in front, I want to get back to my home and my job, and to the not very remarkable life that is mine.

ANONYMOUS.

From Yen-an, China

TO NEW MASSES: You may be interested in this letter (dated August 20) that I received from a Chinese friend who recently arrived in the capital of the Eighth Route Army region, deep in the Chinese northwest. He writes:

"It was at the end of last June that I finally reached my destination—Yen-an. It might be interesting to tell you a few things about the conditions of life here. The majority of people live in caves, which cost much less than ordinary houses. To live in a cave—that is my first experience—might sound strange to you. But in fact, it is not bad. Most of the caves are situated on the hills; they are well built and well ventilated. Besides, they are cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Of course I do not intend to cover up the fact that anyone who has been used to city life would suffer considerably here at the beginning. For example, here we have no means of transportation except mules and horses. We have to walk a lot. There are a few cars but they are only used for important missions, on account of the prohibitive cost of gasoline. We often swim in the stream, not only for recreation but to bathe, since we haven't got bathing facilities yet. The problem of food is solved entirely through good organization and intense work. Not an inch of soil is spared. Even on the top of hills we can see yellow rice and vegetables planted. Rain is scarce here but occasionally we still have floods, resulting from the militarists' systematic destruction of forests during the former period of civil war. Today the building up of new forests and irrigation systems is a prominent part of the reconstruction program of the Border Region government here. In short, the economic backwardness of Yen-an makes conditions very difficult.

"But at the same time, Yen-an is most modern! The new democratic system—a model for all China—is right here. Yen-an reacts quickly and accurately to every important event that occurs in remote corners of the world.

"Our people realize clearly the mounting diffi-

culties ahead, but we are marching forward with confident strides. In the past year the heroic Eighth Route Army has smashed numerous mopping-up campaigns launched by the Japanese invaders. From July 7, 1939, to July 7, 1940, the third anniversary of the Lukiaochow Incident, the Eighth Route Army has fought more than 7,000 battles (up to last May), killed and wounded more than 60,000 Japanese soldiers and more than 20,000 puppet army soldiers, captured hundreds of Japanese and more than 15,000 puppet army soldiers. During this period it has captured 110 big guns, 720 machine guns, 38,000 rifles, 7,000,000 rounds of bullets, more than 10,000 hand grenades, and more than 200 boxes of poison gas bombs. It has destroyed 1,200 automobiles, more than 70 tanks, 50 big guns (heavy artillery). It has collected 30,000 pounds of wire from enemy communication lines. It has also destroyed 1,700 miles of railways and 17,000 miles of highways so that the mechanized troops of our enemy could not move. During the past year the Japanese casualty list included six ranking generals, nine regiment commanders, and one brigade chief of staff—the result of the struggle of the Eighth Route Army."

ELSA TRAVIS.

Los Angeles, Cal.

"Sunny Florida"

TO NEW MASSES: I've been hitting the hard spots on the road in Florida. Some of the Northern job-seekers have already reached here, numbering into the thousands. Some are remaining in Jacksonville, others going on to Miami. As one of these birds of passage, I spoke to a few who had already been there. Remember in *The Grapes of Wrath* the man returning bitterly from California, not being believed by those who were going there? Well, I've seen it happen here. Help for the stranded—from the Travelers Aid—consists of two "meals" and a night at the Salvation Army. The influx is caused by reports that the great airport being built here needs men. So skilled men from distant states are pouring in—and sleeping in the Salvation Army. Local newspapers are calling this "the fastest growing city in the country." This is interesting: undoubtedly in the swing of a "boom," it affords a good illustration of how serious is the economic crisis. For the slums sprawl here, there are men without jobs, and the hunger is real. Politicians control WPA with an iron grip. Relief is an "invisible" thing: the allotment of food stamps which takes its place amounts in value to \$2 a month, or 50c a week. So much has been said about the treatment of Negroes here that I'll only mention a few things I've witnessed. Scene: a local store. Enter a white person. Salesman: "Can I help you, ma'am?" Enter a Negro: "Something for yuh, customer?" Scene two, same place. Negro sits in front of shoe store, white woman enters, sees Negro in front, starts to leave. Salesman comes over, motions Negro to the back of store, asks white woman to take seat. A Negro says, "I don't like these shoes." Salesman answers, "Well, I don't like smart niggers. Now get the hell out!" Southerners used to say the Negroes loved slavery, but then there was the Civil War. Now they say the Negroes are happy—but the Negroes run to the North in thousands. But this is not the whole story: there's a National Maritime Union here, and a retail grocery union, and a cigar workers' union, which are really active. The cigar workers won a big strike here in face of the usual police terror. There's a good deal of hope in organization, even in the hardest spots of Florida.

PETER JEMIS.

Jacksonville, Fla.

Argosy Across the USA

Ralph Ellison discusses "The Argonauts," written by five members of the American Youth Congress. "No. 21 Castle Street" and other books reviewed.

THE ARGONAUTS, by Lillian E. Ross, George Whitman, Joe Wershba, Helen Ross, and Mel Fiske. Modern Age Books. \$2.75.

"THE ARGONAUTS," written by five members of the American Youth Congress, throws a bright light upon the national conditions which have formed the consciousness of the youth movement, as they appear to its participants. Taking its title from the legend of Jason and the Golden Fleece, the book is a record of what five young writers saw, heard, felt, and understood as they explored the United States by car. It was not a romantic trip, nor—although they did have a few illusions—were the travelers romantics; they hadn't started out that way. They were five unemployed people just out of college. They wanted to find America "to see how it looked and to learn how we fitted into the picture." A newspaperman suggested that they write a book about the trip, and a publisher offered them a cash advance, agreeing to pay for the book by sections as it was mailed to him.

With a car bought on the instalment plan, a list of names of people to interview, and a supply of food they set out. They toured the country, North, South, East, and West; sleeping in hotels, tourist camps, and artist colonies; visiting the Hoovervilles and Hollywood; labor conventions and union halls. They asked questions and they heard the people talk. The trip convinced them that there is an America "too good to be buried in books." But it was covered by the shadow of unemployment and humiliation and fear; and not even the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains could dwarf the signs of human suffering. They saw the Joads and the sharecroppers, the Harlan mine operators, Associated Farmers, and the Bourbons. And they saw the people and their organizations, fighting against these forces with high consciousness and heroism.

Older writers have written of the America which emerges from the pages of *The Argonauts*, but here we have a freshness which comes from the impact of America upon youthful sensibilities. Here is America seen from the angle of young people who feel that while the dignity of man is a precious thing, "the dignity of youth is even more precious, because when that is destroyed or perverted, the dignity of man is broken from the start." They discovered the sources of American dignity and the forces which trample it down. Their book also throws an oblique light upon the forces at work in the political campaign just ended, and it helps you to understand why, although President Roosevelt was re-elected, the people did not endorse his war policies.

As the Argonauts record their impressions

in simple, sure prose, you are struck by their dead earnestness. You are convinced that they have listened carefully and studied sharply the America of which they write. With them you get a sense of America's geographical distances, you meet the people caught in the common web of the problems of unemployment, hunger, and threatening war.

And despite all its contrasts of rich and wasting country and starving humiliated people, despite its ending with the authors searching the want-ads for jobs, *The Argonauts* leaves you with the feeling that out there in the country are the forces that will someday, like Jason, seize the Golden Fleece and make "America America again."

RALPH ELLISON.

Pre-Fascism and After

NO. 21 CASTLE STREET, by H. W. Katz. Viking Press. \$2.50.

IN HIS second novel, the author of *The Fishmans* chronicles the painful adjustment of an Eastern Jewish immigrant family, a widower and his two sons, to life in a small German town during the post-war years. The father, like so many Polish Jews in Germany, is first a peddler, then the owner of a tiny clothing store. He fails economically and never succeeds in integrating himself with German culture. Stateless and despised, he clings to the end to the outmoded ritual and customs of his simple pre-war Galician village. The older son, who tells the story, revolts against his father, becoming a radical and an atheist. He loves the German language and wishes to become a German writer, but is brutalized by his German schoolteachers as an alien Jew. When the Nazis take power he is forced to flee to France. The younger son follows a more conventional petty bourgeois course, going from business school to work in an elegant department store, accepting the values of the middle class. The depression of 1930 wrecks his morale when it destroys his job. After a terrible taste of Nazi persecution, this thoroughly "Germanized" Jew goes to Palestine as a farmer.

The press falsely acclaims *No. 21 Castle Street* as a novel of the "Jew under Hitler." As a matter of fact, the book shows that it was not Nazism alone that destroyed the masses of poor Jews in Germany. It dealt them the final knockout blow in their long heartrending battle, the battle of all the poor in Germany, with the economic decay and chauvinistic ideology of imperial and post-war Germany. There are two successful series

of pictures in this book and they have a logical inter-relationship. The first is the group of vignettes of school life in Germany during and after the first world war. The school is the perfect reflection of a society. In Katz' small-town gymnasium we have a strong core of utterly fascist teachers, sadistic anti-Semitic martinets already expert in *Blut und Boden* ideas. We have their stooges among the students, already spying upon the Jewish and working-class boys; the small group of democratic liberal professors; the school authorities, drawn from the old imperial bureaucracy, supine before their nationalistic younger colleagues. One does not forget such pictures as that of Zunk, the sadistic drillmaster, brutally whipping the Jewish hunchback, Benno Nadel.

The second series of pictures is called: "A Nation Awakes." It shows us the common people of Germany in the period between Jan. 30, 1933, when Hitler became chancellor, and April 1, the day on which National Socialist Germany staged its first great anti-Jewish boycott. Zunk is chief of police in the little town. Benno Nadel is tortured to death. Heinz Levy, the brilliant philosophy student, is hounded into committing suicide while the Aryan doctor who might have saved him refuses to treat a Jew on the National Boycott day. Hummel, one of Zunk's old non-Jewish scapegoats, now a militant socialist, awaits a general strike call which never comes from the Social-Democratic trade-union bureaucrats. The liberal Professor Urban has gone crazy as a result of the storm troopers' beatings.

How has Zunk been able to train storm troopers all these years? Why has he been able to come to power as the little fuhrer of this small town? Katz tells us why. The Weimar Republic under its Social-Democratic leadership, tolerated the Zunks and maintained them in official positions in spite of their demonstrated culpability in the Kapp putsch and other provocations.

The book fails to show that when the Brown Terror spread over Germany, the Communist Party was already prepared to resist the Nazis and that it immediately organized subterranean agitation. While the Socialists (as Katz shows) fell apart, completely disoriented by this new fatherland in which peaceable "societies" for the "gradual evolution" into socialism were ruthlessly outlawed, the Communists held firm. Not only did they refuse to be bought by the Nazis, as Katz shows through one of his characters; they continued and intensified the struggle under new conditions.

Katz' strength lies more in his journalist's ability to observe and sketch background than

in character creation. He has, however, given us two memorable characters. One is the hero's father, Yossel Fishman, "an insignificant timid little man, burdened with cares. A man low in spirit, almost broken—a tormented Eastern Jew, cheated out of his life." A contrast to this sad and bewildered figure is Kupke, the storm trooper who finds in fascist ideas of his race superiority, the justification for his wife-beating, criminal forging, blackmail, and drunkenness. His evolution from vice and crime to storm trooping for reaction has its American parallel in Ford's prison-recruited service squad.

SYLVIA GILBERT.

Never-Never Land

THE STRAW HAT, by Joseph Vogel. Modern Age. \$2.50.

THERE is some irony in this third novel of Joseph Vogel's, *The Straw Hat*, but he has blunted his sharp edge against trivialities. The setting reminds one of Molnar's *Liliom*. A young man visits his Uncle Gus, a concessionaire in a cheap amusement park upstate. For four days it rains and a potpourri of characters—the incautiously amorous uncle, a Chinese gambler, a comic-strip small-time Italian tough (with a scar across his face), Aunt Marlene, and an obviously seducible female—argue, play craps, tumble in the hay-loft, try to steal each other's bedmates, and otherwise disport themselves until the rain stops and business can start. Incident follows incident but none of them cuts deep. Character tumbles on character (literally) but none of them is drawn in the round. Uncle Gus roars through the novel like a tornado, and yet he fails to body forth. There is some humor and some vague philosophizing on the young man's part, and some stretches of effective action-writing that lead one to believe that Mr. Vogel can do much better than this.

There is a distinction between artistic belief and reality. By a suspension of our daily norms, we believe, we enter into the operatic Siegfried, papier mache dragon and all. That is to say, fantasy can be real while experienced, given a creative purpose that informs the fantasy with meaning. At the other end of the scale there is art such as Steinbeck's or Dreiser's, realistic in a socially referable sense. Now, Mr. Vogel might have written us a fantasy: the amusement park being the insane society we live in, the characters pitiable ironic Chaplinesques of frustration and will. In that case, the people need not have been real in the sense we meet them in the flesh; they could have been sketched ever so lightly, or caricatured beyond all semblance, so long as their symbolic function remained clear. That may have been Mr. Vogel's intention. But to give us a little of one and a little of the other without thinking the problem through in either vein is to write a novel that disappears in never-never land.

SIDNEY ALEXANDER.

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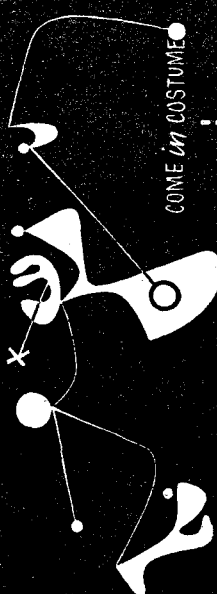
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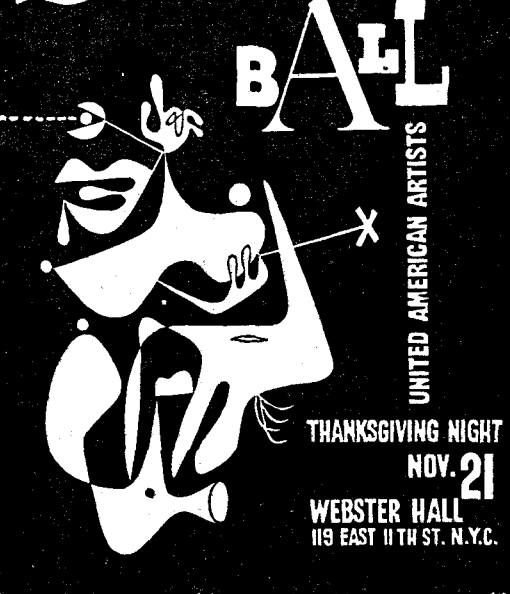
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Southern "Free" Press

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOUTHERN WHITE PRESS TOWARD NEGRO SUFFRAGE, 1923-1940. Edited by Raymond W. Logan. With a foreword by Charles H. Wesley. The Foundation Publishers, Washington, D. C. 75 cents.

THE attitude of the Southern white press toward Negro suffrage can be expressed in two words: against it. The Southern press is openly contemptuous of democracy. Read the following excerpts from editorials in the *Charleston News and Courier*, cited in the compilation under review:

"... the *News and Courier* is not a democrat. It fears and hates democratic government. . . . In South Carolina, the Democratic party has been, so far as the Negro vote is concerned, a Fascist party, and that is why the *News and Courier* 'cooperates' with it."

The hundreds of quotations in this book show that not one Southern white newspaper favors enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment. It is favored only by Negro papers and many of the labor newspapers. And the latter of course, are not "white" periodicals; they reflect the interests of the Negro and white masses of the South. But the attitude of the "white"—that is, the ruling class—press is not the attitude of the Southern people. The many Southern organizations formed within the last few years to fight disfranchisement, the support given this fight by hundreds of Southern union locals, churches, clubs, women's groups, demonstrate that if the Southern white press does not want suffrage for the people, the people want suffrage for themselves. This book reveals an interesting division of opinion between the editorials, which unanimously oppose universal suffrage, and the news stories and letters to the editor, most of which express the growing movement for the right to vote.

Within the white press, however, there is a division of opinion—which is perhaps also a division of labor—as to tactics. The poll tax, chief instrument of disfranchisement in the South today, denies the ballot not only to the majority of the Negro people, but to more than two-thirds of the whites. Most of the newspapers in the Black Belt, heart and center of Negro oppression, fight to retain this tax. Others favor its abolition so that more whites may vote, but discuss means for the continued disfranchisement of the Negroes. The trick has been tried before: to split white from Negro in the 1870's, ex-slaveholders offered the whites the "grandfather clause," an all-white textile industry, and other morsels. The final outcome for the white masses is to be seen in the Southern wage differential, health and education differential, etc. But today the splitting tactic offers much less chance of success. The fight against the poll tax has united Negro and white masses to a greater degree than at any time since Reconstruction.

Among the methods of disfranchising the Negroes, should the poll tax be repealed, these

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newspapers suggest: the lily-white Democratic primary, property qualifications, and "understanding" tests which give the examiner much latitude. The New Orleans *Item* says frankly: "... everybody knows that our election laws were not constructed to permit denial of the suffrage to responsible white voters on technical grounds." (My emphasis—E. L.)

The excerpts from the press cited in this book cover a period of eight years. For about two of those years, the white press of the South was beginning to turn away from the national leadership of the Democratic Party. This was, of course, the period of the New Deal. In this era the Democratic national convention abolished its two-thirds rule, thus weakening the traditional leadership of Southern politicians within the party. Roosevelt attempted to purge from the ranks the most reactionary Southern politicians. So there is much talk in the press, in this period, of bolting the party, talk of a complete political realignment. Unfortunately, this realignment did not materialize. Roosevelt, as a matter of fact, never dealt all the cards in the New Deal deck. His "purges" did not succeed, precisely because he took no measures to enforce universal suffrage in the South. Today the Southern reactionaries are again in the leadership of the party. But the late, brief rage of the Southern press against Roosevelt, as reflected in this volume, is a measure of his present treachery to the Southern people.

ELIZABETH LAWSON.

Brief Reviews

TOIL AND HUNGER, by Don West. Hagglung Press, San Benito, Texas.

This is a thin volume of poems by Don West, the well known young Georgia minister and labor organizer. The poems are about Southern folk: Georgia plowmen and Carolina mill workers. They are songs of the mountaineers and valley-dwellers whom the poet encountered on his trips as an organizer, and they sing and burn with the honest hate that Don West feels for the greedy forces which trample the lives of Southern people. These are the poems of a courageous Southern leader, through which he communicates in simple, honest, and lyrical words a message which should be heard by the whole South. Here in poetry are the ideas and emotions which West has long ago dared express in action, action which slowly is changing the Southern scene.

THE MIDDLE CLASS IN AMERICAN POLITICS, by Arthur N. Holcombe. Harvard University Press. \$2.50.

Professor Holcombe has a special gift for the scholarly bromide. "From the welter of discussion a variety of opinion emerges," or "The solidarity of the Solid South is not an altogether natural phenomenon." Nevertheless, there is some useful material here which proves the contrary of the book's thesis: that middle class politics and philosophy will save the country. Mr. Holcombe is pathetic when he tries wrestling with Marx.

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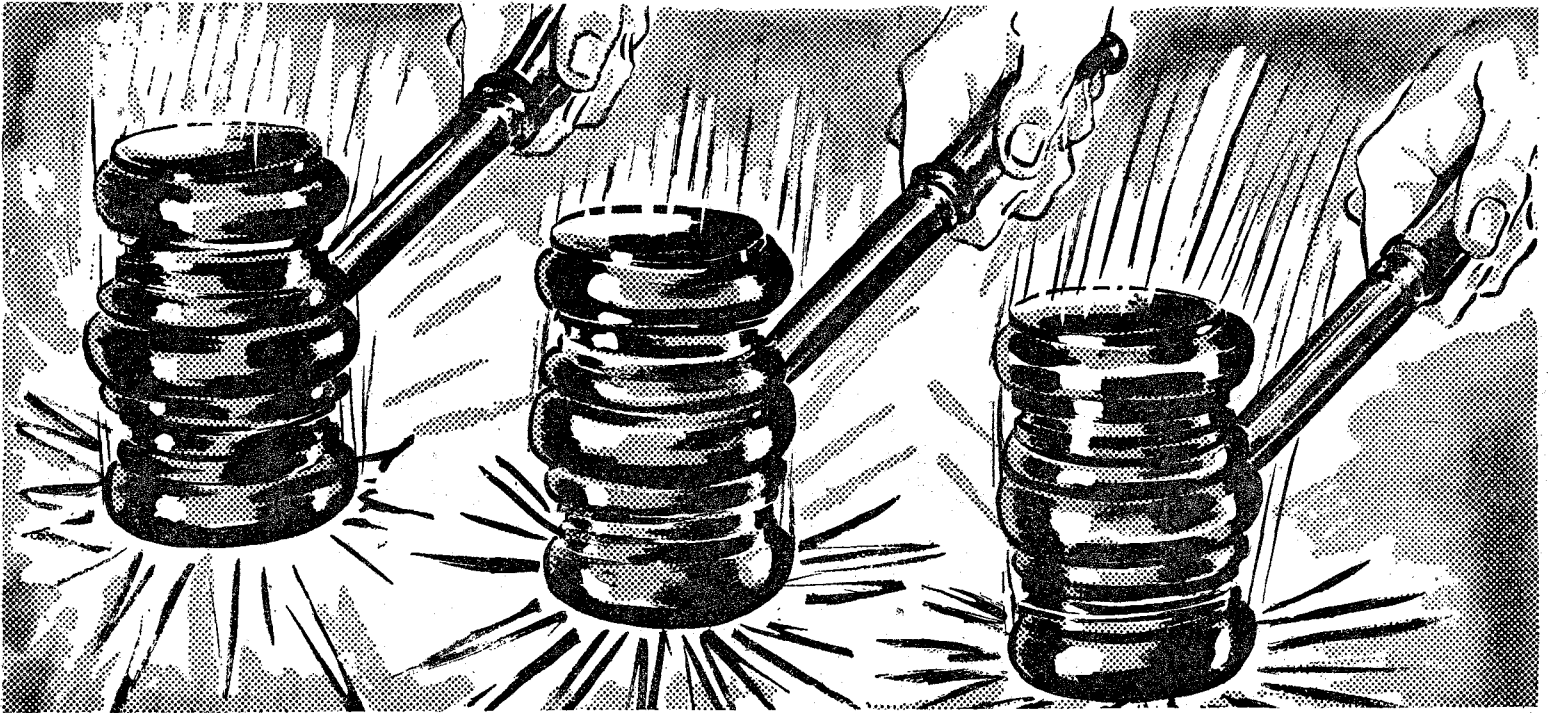
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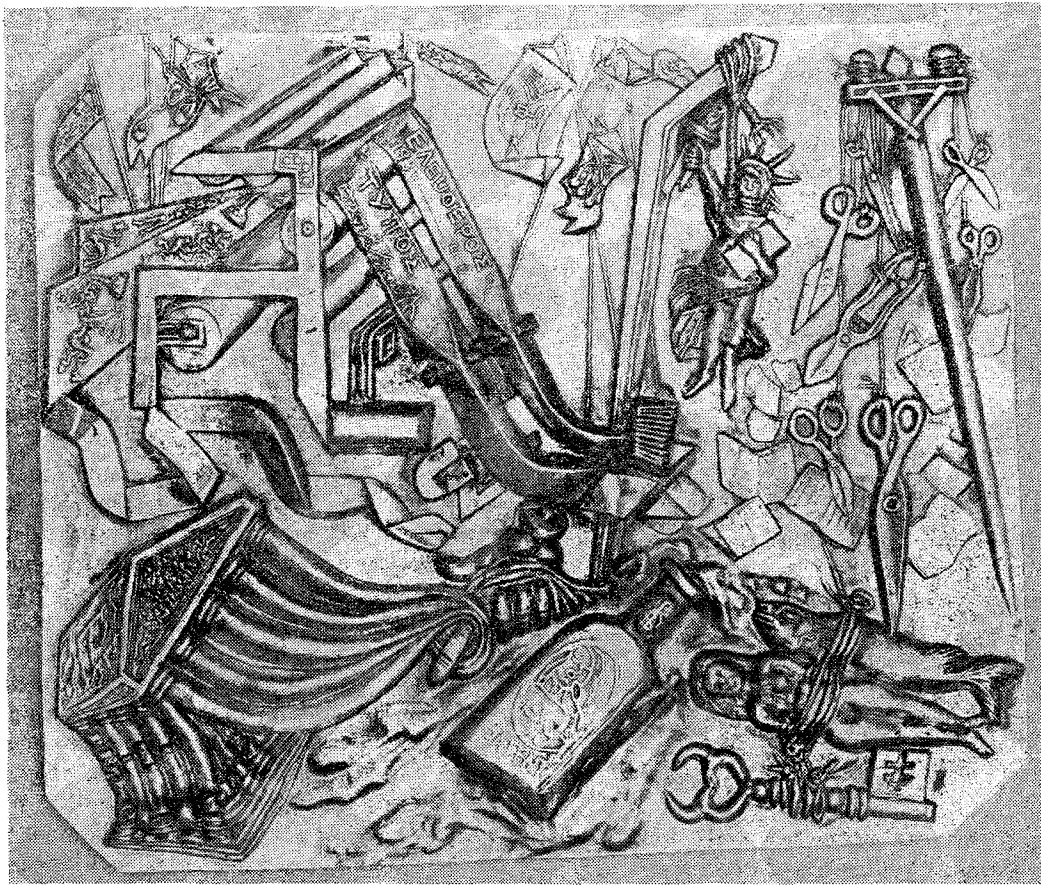
The Art of David Smith

The master of the medallion, William Blake writes, has achieved "the union of art and a deliberate thesis." The movies reviewed: "Escape" and "Northwest Mounted Police."

THE union of art and a deliberate thesis has often been productive of brilliant results, as witness Hogarth, Blake, Daumier, and countless others. But just as the invention of photography compelled new departures in illustration, so the discovery of the social world by the artist must inevitably alter the view that the eye and hand of the artist are the servants of an autonomous soul, and that the incorporation of ideas into art was a treasonable act, an admittance of the colorless and formless figments of the brain into the city of perception. This attitude was fruitful, once religious and historical preoccupations left us. When the countless Madonnas and kings went their way, individualist art increasingly sought its own statement of the world. Art was bought by individuals, whose money was private, not social, so both the producer and consumer of art were synoptic as to its objects. The artist separated himself from what he deemed unesthetic material. At last, in our time, this reached its logical completion with the abstractionists.

It is the more significant then that so consistent and accomplished a creator of abstract sculpture as David Smith has imparted his craftsmanship to this series of medallions that are related to the present life of men both through direct citation and by potent symbolism. Three streams converge in his work. These are abstract art, social theses through pictorial figures, and, above all, a savant symbolism that for the first time has taken over the complex and richly allusive imagery of Bosch, Breughel, and Goya and incised them in metals. The wealth of this material is so conjoined and contrived that he who looks at these medals with fresh and delighted eyes is compelled to probe more and more, swept on by their superb passion, until he realizes that the permutations of this swarming symbolism can never be wholly explored. Hence, as against dead art in which the picture is imposed on the spectator, David Smith allows a legitimate range of association to each observer, who can thus make up his own cadenzas on these flowing themes.

Of the finish and the painstaking craftsmanship of the work, let sculpture speak. Even dentists' drills were used for the painful images, even jewelers' tools cooperated in this striking achievement. To those who dread the woodcut terrors of the Dance of Death or other bizarre inflections, and for whom all complex sanity is madness, David Smith will seem bewildering. But for those anxious to participate in his visions, there will come a stern pleasure in unraveling his thousand devices, and at last a great fresh shock when a leap in perception reveals that these devices have made up the



THE FOURTH ESTATE. One of the medallions by David Smith in the current exhibition of his work at the Willard Gallery, New York City.

drastic, formal unity of the fifteen medals.

David Smith carves a private soldier hired by industrial capital to shoot down strikers. He puts him outside the circle of his medal, this irruption of a new force outside the old circle of the state. When the fish symbol, sacred to the Phoenician and Christian of the Catacombs as divine totems, reappear in Smith's medals, they illustrate modern cloacas to replace the Catacombs, the sensational sex press with its travesties on the passions. Thus the age-old symbols of the race are woven into the modern scene to illustrate their graphic equivalents in modern times. In these medals, David Smith has transcended the simple social message, that which treats of the special social conflicts of our age as though they had no ancestry. The inferno of these times is given in its specific quality and intensity, as produced by the contradictions in society.

Smith releases the free flow of etching and of oils into metals: thus the curse of immediacy and of merely illustrated theses is avoided. Look at the society lady whose breasts are fused into her champagne glasses, at that medal, rich as antique seals or Hellenistic gems or coins, wherein the bull takes on a dozen meanings from sex and fraud to death in the

arena; scrutinize the varied roles of musical instruments throughout; and ask from what treasurehold of legend and beauty have come these fluid orchestrations. Surrealism has dabbled in religious and biological symbolism, in fashionplate trickery, but simplified, in these medals, it shows itself capable of an expression that will live.

May David Smith, in less than three years, have occasion to strike a second series of medallions to commemorate man's triumph over the monsters that hold him in rusty chains!

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Movie Roundup

Nazi refugees, Canadian Mounties, grape growers, and cattlemen.

THE worst thing about Nazi Germany, contrary to the impression conveyed in MGM's new anti-Nazi picture, *Escape*, is not the stringency of the foreign exchange restrictions. I should like to tell MGM, as one anti-Nazi's opinion, that no one is really concerned about Germany's exchange restrictions, and if an American lady who is also a

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German citizen wants to sell her house in Germany and gyp the Nazis by smuggling the money across the border, that is her lookout. When she is caught she is put into a concentration camp along with other frail ladies who have presumably also violated the exchange restrictions. I suppose there were workers in this concentration camp but I didn't see them. Just before she is to be executed her son arrives from America and arranges her escape.

The escape is handled just about perfectly, for Mervyn LeRoy, the director, is an old hand at that kind of thing. Escaping from a concentration camp is no joke. First the camp doctor gives the lady a drug which induces coma. Then he pronounces her dead. Then her son puts her in a coffin and takes her out of the camp. Then there is the question of a passport. These sequences are as exciting as any I have seen in recent movies, and the fact that the concentration camp might as well have been Alcatraz is beside the point. If it had been Alcatraz, an American jail, she would have had to follow the Will H. Hays code of ethics and go back to expiate her crime.

In the course of the escape the young American, played by Robert Taylor, tangles with a countess, played by Norma Shearer, and persuades her to come to America. It happened that the day I saw this picture I read the weekly news letter put out by International Labor Defense, and if Norma Shearer had known what was ahead of her in America she would have settled for Guatemala. She would have been fingerprinted, and her prints sent to the FBI. She wouldn't have been able to get a job in the defense industry, and if she got on WPA she would have been thrown off immediately. If her experiences in Germany had led her to conclude that something was cockeyed about capitalism she might have been prosecuted for criminal syndicalism or for asking people to sign election petitions, for making a minor mistake on her passport application, for conspiracy under the anti-trust act, or for possessing a copy of *Das Kapital*. Then she would have been deported. I don't think a German refugee would be at ease in America knowing that a majority of Congress was only waiting for the propitious moment to pass legislation setting up concentration camps which will be just as hard to get out of as those in Germany. But wait a minute—she's a countess, which puts everything in a different light. All countesses have to be afraid of in America is being interned in the Stork Club.

"NORTHWEST MOUNTED POLICE"

Northwest Mounted Police is a familiar Technicolor epic about red-coated Canadian Mounties who invariably get their man, and if you are as fond as I am of Cecil B. DeMille, the fairy godfather of Hollywood extras, you will probably like it. It is one long, violent cliché, peopled with great mobs from whom you are just able to single out Paulette Goddard and Gary Cooper. However, your preoccupation with its battle scenes, chases, love-making, and scenery won't enable you to forget that the man the Mounties get in 1940 is not

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ALFRED GOLDSTEIN, popular political analyst, reviews THE NEWS OF THE WEEK every SUNDAY EVENING at Workers School, 2nd floor, 50 East 13 Street. Admission 25c.

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the treacherous half-breed with no respect for pure womanhood as represented by Claudette Colbert, but an official in the Seamen's Union who sees no logic in taking a wage cut when the shipowners are making more money than they ever saw before in their lives. Hollywood has given the Mounties the kind of buildup it gave the FBI, and you would never guess that they were actually secret political police engaged in labor-spying, strike-breaking, midnight raids, and systematic terror.

"THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED"

They Knew What They Wanted suffers from the same trouble. Its setting makes you think of vigilantes and fascism when you are supposed to be thinking of goodness and benevolence, but this time it can't be blamed on the newspapers. When the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee investigated the real conditions in the fruit-growing valleys of California, the papers were not guilty of giving the findings any conspicuous publicity. I believe the House committee studying the migratory labor problem is still in session somewhere in the country, but you wouldn't know it from the press. Mainly due to *The Grapes of Wrath*, it is generally recognized that there aren't many California grape growers who own their own ranches unless they are also presidents of insurance companies, and that migratory labor is not the result of restlessness among young men who want independence. So this story of Charles Laughton, rich and lovable Italian grape grower, Carole Lombard, poor and desperate waitress, and William Gargan, cad and migratory worker, seems like an adaptation of a 1925 stage success. That, as a matter of fact, is what it is. In the cast are an unborn baby and Frank Fay, who tries unsuccessfully in the role of a parish priest to repress his Broadway leer.

OTHER MOVIES

I also saw *The Westerner*, *Second Chorus*, and *Christmas in July*. The fight in *The Westerner* between farmers and cattlemen is not an immediate issue at present, but it is completely authentic and after all these years, it ought to be. Walter Brennan is the best bad man I have ever seen. I'm afraid he will not get an Academy award because he is not attached to any studio, in which case I will start my own Academy. *Second Chorus* returns Fred Astaire to light comedy after an awful experience last year in *Broadway Melody*. Paulette Goddard, whom I have sent my autographed photograph for her part in *The Great Dictator*, dances with Astaire briefly and manages to keep up. The fact that there are only a couple of dances in *Second Chorus* would wreck an ordinary Astaire movie, but fortunately the dialogue doesn't remind you of a song-cue and it can stand by itself, which is astonishing in an Astaire movie. For a time Astaire is a Dartmouth undergraduate, but my demand for realism does not extend to realism in musical comedies. *Christmas in July* consoles young people with the thought that if they don't make enough money

to get married on perhaps they will win \$25,000 in a slogan contest. That is all I can think of to say against it. The movies this week have been unusually good. Maybe they're our best form of entertainment after all. Block-booking has been abolished by a consent decree and I see that Soviet pictures are going to be shown in this country again.

DANIEL TODD.

Staging Hollywood

"Beverly Hills" and "Quiet Please!" —dramas about the movies.

Two plays about Hollywood have just appeared and one more is due. If the third (*Glamour Preferred*) is no better than these, you can call it three strikes and out.

Both *Quiet Please!* (Guild) and *Beverly Hills* (Fulton) are conventional triangle stuff, with no extra angles added. In the first, the work of F. Hugh Herbert and Hans Kraly, you are taking part in the shooting of a film, wherein the great star is actually (in real life) pining away for her errant husband. She gets him back by faking a vengeful one-night stand with a garage man. In the second, you are in the home of a successful scenarist whose ambitious wife wants to wangle him the assignment of writing the screen play for the year's great super-super. In both you are taken sub-surface (but not very far) into the business of Hollywood producer intrigue, where all human values disappear in the mad scramble for money and position. Big Names are bandied about in the spicy way Louella Parsons made famous and the screen idols' feet are revealed to be of very common clay.

Neither *Quiet Please!* nor *Beverly Hills* (by Lynn Starling and Howard J. Green) possesses any depth of social analysis or felicity of execution. Both make a play for the trade that buys erotic books and pictures. By implication, of course, it is traditional to write superficially of superficial people, but a case could be made out for the opposite. For if you want to show how people never develop beyond the mental and emotional age of twelve, you ought to know a good deal about them. Neither of these plays will help you. And the many genuine, intelligent Hollywood people do not appear in these plays at all.

In *Quiet Please!* commendation should go to Jane Wyatt, Ann Mason, Donald Woods, and Gordon Jones; in *Beverly Hills*, an almost uniformly excellent cast, numbering among them Enid Markey, Helen Claire, Violet Heming, and Doro Merande, work like Trojan horses to put the thing over.

I cannot recommend Ethel Waters' new show, *Cabin in the Sky*, despite ingratiating performances by the star, Rex Ingram, Dooley Wilson, and the brilliant Katherine Dunham Dancers. For this is the usual Broadway chauvinism and restates the usual assumption that Negroes are charming clowns whose main interests in life are sex, religion, gambling, and personal ostentation in clothes. Skip it please.

ALVAH BESSIE.

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The principle would be particularly applicable on this Coast where the lumber industry is tied in knots by recurrent strikes and where the job of getting out material for housing the Army has been seriously impeded. The strikes have forced the lay-off of 10,000 workers, though the strikers number less than half of that total. If the latter were removed by the draft defense work could go ahead.

How a man on strike could claim deferment on any ground is difficult to imagine.

Labor Will Decide!

That organ of the open-shoppers, the Los Angeles Times of Harry Chandler and the Associated Farmers, Inc., has a few interesting ideas in store for labor. "Draft the Strikers!" it cries in this clipping from its issue of Nov. 10, 1940. Then there is the forced labor plan, exposed by NEW MASSES' open letter to Attorney-General Jackson in this issue.

The big question in America today is Labor. The great trade unions, the millions of unorganized workers of America are under fire. This week the CIO, the AFL, and the Farmers Union are meeting. The workingmen want to decide their own destiny. But the Administration has other plans. Will FDR succeed in his scheme to tie labor to the war-machine? War or peace, fascism

or democracy lie in the balance. What will happen?

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This week Bruce Minton is in Atlantic City covering the CIO convention; Bill Gropper is sketching the dramatic scenes on the floor. Down in New Orleans Barbara Giles is attending the AFL meeting. Their stories will appear in next week's issue. For later issues, Joseph North, Simon W. Gerson, James Morison, and others will write on the great class conflicts now maturing.

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